

THE Spiritual Magazine.

Vol. II.]

AUGUST, 1861.

[No. 8.]

SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA.

By BENJAMIN COLEMAN.

II.

THERE is a phase of mediumship to be met with in America which has never, that I am aware of, been known in Europe, which tests in the most satisfactory manner the actual presence of spirits, and the faculty which certain media possess of seeing and recognizing them; and that is, the power of delineating on canvas or cardboard an exact likeness of the spirit.

I am indebted to Mr. Berry, of Boston, editor of the *Banner of Light* newspaper, for a photograph copy of a spirit drawing, which he had just received, enclosed in a letter, from Mr. P. Butter, of Springfield, Illinois. It is the full-length likeness of a child in ball costume, four years of age, who was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Soaper, of Bloomington, Illinois. It is said that the spirit of this child presented itself to Mr. W. P. Anderson, a portrait-drawing medium, who was unknown to the family, and that he produced, in an abnormal state with his eyes closed, the original picture, life size, in 2 hours and 40 minutes, and it is pronounced to be an exact likeness. I showed the photograph to Mrs. Burbank Felton, of Boston, a very intelligent and well-known trance-speaking medium, of whom I shall have occasion to speak presently, and she told me that she had recently seen a most wonderful production obtained under somewhat similar, but still more curious, circumstances, through the mediumship of a Mr. J. B. Fayett, of Oswego, who is a tailor by trade, and who is unacquainted in his natural state, with the art of painting in any way. The likeness Mrs. Felton saw was thus obtained:—A friend of hers, Mrs. Macumber, a well-known public test medium, whilst on a visit with a Mr. and Mrs. Burgess, gave them at a *séance* a message from their spirit daughter, to the effect that she would appear to Mr. Fayett on a particular day and hour to sit for her likeness, and she described very minutely how she would be dressed. They lived at some distance from

Oswego, and had never heard of Mr. Fayett; but they wrote to his address, and told him that a spirit had promised them to sit to him for a likeness on a specified day and hour, without mentioning any particulars whatever, and they requested him to send them anything he might get at that time. (On the day but one after this day, Mr. Fayett sent the drawing which Mrs. Felton had seen, which proved to be an exact and artistically-finished likeness of Mr. and Mrs. Burgess's child, dressed precisely as she had said she would be. It was drawn by Mr. Fayett whilst in the trance state, *in total darkness*, which, it is said, are the only conditions under which he can produce these spirit portraits. I may here, perhaps, be permitted to digress for a moment from my narrative to consider this question of special conditions, which it is claimed are essential to the production of a certain class of spiritual phenomena, but with which the cavilling sceptic invariably quarrels. I hold that it is an unphilosophical state of mind, and one which unfits a man for calm and fair investigation, to insist as a preliminary that his prejudices shall be satisfied. In every situation, and in every act of our lives, we are dependent on conditions. We can effect, under suitable and harmonious arrangements, that which we should find it impossible to accomplish under the slightest variation from them. The chemist requires his darkened room to produce certain results, and the photographer is obliged to have two extremes to bring out his picture. How unreasonable, then, is it to attempt to ignore, as many do, unmistakeable palpable facts in Spiritualism, because they are not done to order. Assuredly, the man who allows his prejudices to interpose, who stands on the pride of intellect plane, and refuses to imitate the humility of the great Newton in the pursuit of truth, misses a golden opportunity, by neglecting Spiritualism, of increasing his wisdom, and, as I believe, his future happiness.

At Boston, I met Miss Lord, of Portland, Maine, and as I was anxious to realise the wonders exhibited through her mediumship, of which I had previously heard, an arrangement was made for me to visit her, and accompanied by three gentlemen holding prominent commercial positions in the city, and all interested in the subject, we formed a circle, including the ladies of the house, of nine persons. Miss Lord is in very delicate health, far advanced, I fear, in consumption, and consequently incapable of any great physical exertion. We took our seats around a good sized table in a small room, the medium being seated between one of my friends and myself, and we formed a chain by holding each other's hands all round the circle, resting them lightly on the surface of the table. On another table, about two or three feet distant from the back of the chair on which the medium sat,

There had been placed various musical instruments—a guitar, a dulcimer, tambourine, harmonium, a horn—such as is used by the fish sellers of the city, and four bells of various sizes, and in a corner of the room there stood a very large bass viol and bow, which I was informed had belonged 70 years ago to one Squire Simmons. After sitting quietly for a few minutes in a subdued light, the medium became entranced by Black Hawk, an Indian Spirit, who is the presiding spirit of the band that visit this circle, and his orders spoken through the medium in broken English, are implicitly obeyed. The first request was that we should sing; which the ladies of the party did, and continued to do through several plaintive airs lasting some minutes, until we had become, as I supposed, harmonised. We were then told to put out the lights, which was done, and seated under the conditions I have described we were left in total darkness. The first manifestation arose from the unseen agent taking the guitar, which was whisked about with great celerity over and around our heads, whilst a quick negro air was capitally played upon it the whole time the instrument was floating about us. It tapped me on the head playfully several times, and once it rested on my shoulder, the air still continuing, with the strings so close to my ear that they touched me in their vibration. It was then announced that Squire Simmons was present, and that he would perform a solo on the bass viol. Three sharp musician's taps were made by the spirit with the bow to call attention, and we listened in mute astonishment to hear this large instrument played upon with all the harmony and force that could be exercised by any performer in the flesh. At its conclusion I thanked the Squire for his condescension, and he responded by tapping me gently with the bow on my head. I then asked him to shake hands with me, but instead of a hand he gave me one end of the bow, shaking it, and holding the other end with quite as firm a grasp as I did. Each of the instruments was played upon by a new performer. The bells were all floating about our heads at one time, ringing harmoniously in tune with the guitar. Black Hawk took the tambourine, and asking for "Hail Columbia" to be sung, he jingled the instrument about in the wildest manner, striking us with it alternately on our heads—then on the table—the back of our chairs—and on the floor with inconceivable rapidity. He then gave us an Indian dance, and the dull heavy bumping and thumping sounds as of feet in mocassins or Indian slippers, kept excellent time. The tambourine was then placed on my head, and he passed his large hand over it, by which I could feel its full shape and size. He concluded this part of his performance by saying "Me do someting else for you," and in an instant the medium seated in her arm chair was lifted on to the centre of the

table, chair and all. I assisted in lifting her from her elevated position, and was surprised at her dead weight, being twice as heavy as I should imagine her to be from her fragile appearance when in her normal condition. Black Hawk blew a shrill and ringing blast on the horn, quite as loud as any human being could do it. He then played on the harmonican, and surprised me by saying through the horn, "How you do, Mr. Coleman." I asked the company if it would be agreeable to have the door opened, as the room felt close and hot, and immediately a fan, which I found had been taken from a drawer in the room, was actively wafted before my face just as if human hands were using it, and still more surprising, a goblet of water was placed to my lips to drink, and though I gently resisted, my head was pushed back and I was thus forced to take a good draught of the cooling beverage. The whole exhibition was a most marvellous and convincing proof of the presence of intelligent invisible agencies, and, apart from all other considerations, the *precision* with which heavy instruments were hurled at times about our heads in the dark, touching us lightly and playfully, was in itself proof positive, that spirit eyes guided, and that no human being handled them. Every sense but that of sight being satisfied, the *séance* was quite as satisfactory to me as if the manifestations had been made in broad daylight.

Of another character, though no less curious and wonderful, were the manifestations which I witnessed on a subsequent evening at New York with Miss Kate Fox. I have spoken of the casual morning visit which I made to this interesting young lady, but I omitted to name that among other messages given to me on that occasion was the following: "When you come here on Friday evening I will manifest my presence in a light—tokens unmistakable in lights.—SYLVESTER." I had no idea of the meaning of this message, nor could Miss Fox explain it, I only knew that Friday evening had been fixed by my friend Mr. L. for us to sit with her. On that evening we accordingly met; our party being limited to Miss Fox and her mother, Mr. L., and myself. We fastened the door of the room, and put out the gas. We sat as usual round a table, taking hold of each other's hands; the ladies being separated by my friend and myself. After various short messages were given by the raps, we were desired to pull open the slides of the table, which being done, an aperture of about a foot in width was made. A request was then rapped out, through the alphabet, "Give us a pencil and paper." I first handed my pencil case through the aperture of the table, which was taken from me by what appeared by the touch to be a naturally shaped hand. I then gave a large sized plain card, which was in like manner taken from me in a quiet

gentle manner. We then heard very distinctly the pencil being used as in writing rapidly, and in a minute or two the card and pencil were handed back to me. On the identical card I found written in a legible hand, though not a fac-simile, "My dear father, may God bless you. I am with you, dear father, pass me not, for I am by your side. I am with you, and to-night I will manifest.—HENRY C. D——." Then gradually there rose up between the opening in the table *a half globular-shaped light*, about the size of the palm of my hand. It was not like a phosphorescent light, it was more like the light of a bull's-eye lantern, spreading an illuminating ray around. It rose three times to the surface of the table, and then disappeared. A hand, naturally shaped and about the ordinary size, was then placed on my head, and continued for some little time to pat and caress me in the kindest and most gentle manner; it felt very warm, almost hot. I put up my hand to touch it; having my pencil case between my fingers, the spirit-hand immediately took hold of the pencil, and held it firmly at one end, whilst with my arm extended above my head I held the other; in this position it was swayed about see-saw like, and then abandoned to me. At this moment a startling rap, much louder than anything of the kind I had ever before heard, was made on the outer surface of the table. I asked for this to be repeated three times, and accordingly three sharp sounding heavy raps were made as if done by a large-sized auctioneer's hammer. The rapping sounds then spread all about the room, and came simultaneously from the walls, floor, and ceiling, and the lights, diminished to the size of a half-crown piece, played about and on us, resting alternately on various parts of our bodies.

My previous experience with Mr. Home had prepared me for all such manifestations as I witnessed with Miss Lord and Miss Fox, and although extremely curious and differing in some important points from his mediumship—they seem only to vary the character of the phenomena, but do not transcend the marvellous facts which hundreds of our neighbours have witnessed at numerous *séances* with Mr. Home, and which have been already fully recorded in the *Spiritual* and *Cornhill Magazines*. It will probably be said among other objections, that even admitting the facts, (which many I know will not do, whilst others will assert that they are *too* real, being all of the devil) when curiosity is once satisfied and the wonder ceases, there is nothing very elevating in this class of manifestations. This objection, as far as it goes, is certainly a valid one, and if the manifestations claiming to be of spiritual origin were indeed confined to the moving of chairs and tables, and of rapping sounds accompanied by only common-place messages, they certainly

would not (except for the consequences they involve) be worth any more consideration than we should give to the curious tricks performed by a Houdin or a Frikel, to which it is usual to compare them. But who but very perverse people, or those who know nothing of the subject, will say that spiritual manifestations, so called, are thus limited in their character, and confined to the phase of unintellectual physical phenomena? Who that has paid the least attention to the subject does not see a wisdom in this lifting of tables into the air, and of these despised rappings, and that thus "God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise." Who does not see that they are necessary to arrest in the first instance the confirmed sceptic, and lead him when nothing else would, to enquire into the "why" and the "wherefore" of these previously denied but now demonstrated facts, and that they are thus made stepping-stones to higher knowledge, and ultimately to the most consolatory of all convictions, that there is indeed another state of existence after the spirit leaves the natural body, and that in that state they who have been dear to us here are not so very far removed from us, but that they can still watch over, guard and direct us during our prolonged pilgrimage on earth.

We, in England, who are only on the threshold of this enquiry, will find when a sufficient number of witnesses have been secured—as in America, where it is said there are hundreds of thousands, that we shall be indifferent to the striking manifestations which now excite our wonder, and shall no doubt settle down to study the higher philosophies, which this new light will have forced upon our previously darkened minds; and we shall then be prepared to recognise and encourage the higher developments of Spiritualism, which will rise up amongst us, as it has amongst our transatlantic brethren, where numbers of previously unlettered men and women, have become writing and trance, or inspirationally influenced, speaking mediums; and by a little patience, and by abstaining from condemning phases which are not understood and may have much hidden wisdom in them, we shall in due time realise the true purport and intent of these modern manifestations, and the *cui bono* so impatiently demanded be made plain to us all.

One of the most interesting writing and seeing mediums with whom I became acquainted in New York, is Mrs. Staats, residing at 87, Amity-street. Her quiet earnest manner assures you at once that she is entirely reliable in all she says and does. She requested me in the first instance to write a number of names, including any of friends I had in the spirit-world. I accordingly wrote a list of about a dozen family names. Her hand, with a pencil, immediately moved towards the paper, and

dashed under the names of Sylvester, Henry and Isabel, who as I have before said, are the only ones related to me who have passed away; the rest of the names I had written were of those still living. She then wrote the name of Harry, and asked me if I recognised it, saying "He is here standing by your side. He tells me that you have lingering doubts about his treatment during his illness. You thought the medical men treated him wrong. He is your son." I said "No, he was not my son." "Well, he was your wife's, and he knows no difference in you. He is very like you. He passed away about four months since. He was very fond of drawing." &c., &c. Whilst Mrs. Staats was making these remarks, which were literally correct, her hand at the same time was writing rapidly a message addressed "My dear father," and signed "Henry." Other short messages followed with snatches of poetry. Then the following words—"We gather, my dear father, wherever you are, and whisper sweet words of consolation and encouragement. You will return satisfied to my dear mother, and I will be with you—

" 'Tapping, gently tapping' on your cheek the while
 Your heart will gladden with the smile,
 Which light up eyes that welcome you,
 When safe at home again.
 I will not whisper, 'nevermore,'
 But come oft as in days of yore,
 And from our treasure to you pour
 A stream of love undying.

"My style as you know."

This was certainly remarkable, as my step-son had a great admiration for the poems of Edgar Poe, and used to imitate his style occasionally.

Mrs. Staats then took another sheet of paper, and said that a very beautiful influence from a charming spirit possessed her, and wrote—"Isabel is here." Be it remembered I had not mentioned any names. The medium continued to write, whilst at the same time she was talking to me, and in a few minutes the following message was completed and handed to me:—"I have long been watching this chance to write a few words of tenderness and love. Dear ones stand waiting to open the door to hearts who have long looked through the dim and shadowy outlines of the past—to gather, if possible, one bright ray of hope—to assure of blessed re-union and communion of soul. Dear mother—your treasures are safe here, and not so far removed but that they can tell their love, and be to you guiding stars, cheering you on and up to this more durable home where angels become teachers. We help in all those hours of darkness,

and disclose those new beauties which are in store for the faithful. Let Faith be to you light in darkness! Hope will lure you onward! Charity will deck you in robes of undying beauty, and your children be the crown of your declining years, and wait to welcome you here, where peace flows on for ever sweet as the love of—ISABEL.”

Mrs. Staats has many visitors who come frequently to obtain communications from the spirit-world, and I was told of some very extraordinary information obtained by one gentleman whom I met there. He got an entire list of names of persons to a document required to establish the birthright of a lady, whose case was recently brought to a successful issue in the English courts of law. Mrs. Staats' hand wrote out directions where this document of ancient date would be found, and gave the fac-similes of the signatures attached to it. I also made the acquaintance, at Mrs. Staats', of another gentleman, a Mr. J—, whose knowledge of Spiritualism was brought about under the following interesting circumstances, which I will endeavour to relate as nearly as I can in his own words,—“I married,” he said, “the daughter of one of the wealthiest men in this city, who disapproved of our union, and refused to see his daughter afterwards. It was a marriage of the purest affection on both sides. She was a woman of unusual accomplishments, of great strength of mind, and capable of giving sound advice on all subjects. There was, indeed, something like inspiration in all she said and did. A proposal was made to me to go to the new settlement of Pikes Peak, in the Rocky Mountains, some thousands of miles away, which is now my settled home. I hesitated, on account of the long separation it would necessarily entail, though the advantages to be derived were great. I discussed the matter with my wife, and she strongly advised me to accept the proposal, which I at length did, though reluctantly, for among other difficulties, she was expecting to become a mother, and I feared the world would think it an unfeeling thing to leave her alone and unprotected at that time. My arrangements being made, I started on my journey, accompanied by my wife as far as Washington. Before parting, my wife said, ‘Now, love, if we should never meet again on earth, let us try to communicate with each other, and let the one who may be removed from this sphere guide and protect the other.’ This remark surprised me; we had never spoken on such a subject before, and we neither of us knew anything of Spiritualism. In due time, I arrived at my destination, and found I had taken the step just in time to anticipate others, and to secure the object I had in view. On my way, I lost off my finger a plain ring which my wife had given me at our parting. It was found by

the conductor of a train by which I had travelled, and restored to me some weeks after; but it was, as you see (showing me the ring), broken. By the next periodical mail, I received this letter from my wife, which I should like you to read." I did so, and it fully corroborated his previous description of her affectionate disposition and her superior acquirements. "Taking up," he continued, "the *New York Herald* of two days subsequent date, I was struck down on seeing the announcement of her death. She had, as I afterwards learned, died suddenly on the very day on which this letter was written. I returned as quickly as I could to New York, where I have remained since, and received my wife's papers and trinkets and this ring (showing it to me), which I gave her at our parting, and which I found, as you see it, *broken exactly as mine had been*. Recollecting the promise we had mutually made, I became anxious to test her ability to manifest to me, and meeting a friend who knew something of Spiritualism, he recommended me to visit Mrs. Staats, and here is the first evidence I ever had of spirit intercourse; see how remarkably this message agrees with her last letter to me. You will not wonder, I am sure, that I should become a firm believer in this faith, and that I should now never take any serious step without seeking her advice, which for six months she has continued to give me from time to time. It is always exceedingly pertinent, clear and reliable." This story which, from memory, I have but imperfectly quoted, will, I trust, prove as interesting to the reader as it was to me.

At the St. Nicholas Hotel, where I staid, I also became acquainted with a gentleman, who told me he was an old convert to a belief in Spiritualism, a Mr. John McKinney, of Lawton, Michigan, where he holds a State appointment. He said, "Spiritualism is recognized by the great majority of those who are residents of the Western States. We all know something of it. Family circles and mediums are everywhere amongst us. It is not a religion with us, but all sects admit the facts, and we meet frequently at each other's houses, not for the purpose of obtaining wonderful manifestations which we have all witnessed in past times and no longer need, but to obtain information and instruction from our departed friends and relatives. I myself was a writing medium for several years; but latterly my power has left me. I have had some very remarkable predictions made in writing through my own hand, and among other things, the deaths of Henry Clay and Daniel Webster were most accurately foretold, and so far back as 1855 I was informed that this present crisis in our political history would occur. I have the papers at home, and will look them up and send them to you. I was told that a separation of the States would take place about this period

—that a collision would ensue, though not leading to very serious consequences—and that our difficulties would culminate about the year 1864, when a new confederation would be made, and the slave question voluntarily settled by the Southerners themselves arranging the terms on which they would consent to its ultimate and final extinction.”

In reply to my question, Mr. McKinney said he had reason to place the fullest confidence on all predictions made by the spirits through his own hands.

I visited at Boston another test-writing Medium, Mr. J. V. Mansfield, who has obtained great celebrity from the character of the communications made through him. I was to him, as to all others in America, an entire stranger. I took my seat in a small ante-room alone: he placed before me a long strip of paper and a pencil, and requested me to address any question I pleased to any one with whom I desired to communicate in the spirit-world, whilst he retired to another room. I did as requested, and having folded the paper containing the writing, and placed my hand upon it, Mr. Mansfield entered the room, and took his seat by my side, and putting his left hand lightly on mine, he traced, as he said, the affinity between me and the spirit by a principle of magnetism, and declared at once that it was the spirit of my son who was about to communicate with me. “I do not guess, he said, I know it for a certainty.” His hand then wrote out rapidly a long message, beginning “My dear father”—and signed “Harry.” The message itself was not worthy of the source from whence it purported to come, but, nevertheless, it contained two very curious and striking allusions. Such as—“*This was known to you before you left your home in Sussex-place, Regent’s Park,*” where I once resided, and “*You can tell your friend Howitt, &c.,*” and at my request the address, adding my Christian name, was appended, none of which particulars could the medium by any likelihood have known.

Trance mediums and inspirational speakers are now very numerous in America, and this form of the spiritual development has, as I have previously said, taken the place of the earlier manifestations, and it seems a most valuable, practical, and highly satisfactory result.

I found crowded audiences assembled to hear discourses delivered by young women, who without previous education have risen up from the middle and lower ranks of society to become teachers; and whose lectures on Theology, Politics, Morals, and Science, are delivered with a force and eloquence which would compare favorably with the most popular lay and clerical speakers of the present day.

I heard Mrs. Cora Hatch for instance, who is a young woman of about three or four and twenty, deliver an address which

purported to be spoken through her by the spirit of the American statesman, Jefferson. I do not stop to inquire or to satisfy myself whether the speaker was really influenced by the particular spirit who claimed to be present, I only know that I listened to a marvellous piece of oratory delivered extempore in well-chosen language without falter or hesitation, occupying an hour and a quarter, by a young uneducated woman; and I am left to say whether I can reasonably regard it as the result of a natural genius and ordinary training, (which I am assured by herself and those who know her that it is not) or of some abnormal influence which I am told it is, and I confess that I am forced to receive the latter as the true solution of such a phenomenon.

Miss Emma Harding, whom I had also the pleasure of hearing, is one of the most popular lecturers in America, and I think deservedly so, but in her case it cannot be said that she was without training or education, and her discourses, I believe, so far differ from Mrs. Hatch, that she may be said to be an eloquent advocate for the truths of Spiritualism, and rather than an inspirational speaker. Miss Harding is now devoting herself to the establishment of a home in Boston for the fallen of her sex, and I was happy to hear that ladies and gentlemen of all denominations were assisting her to complete her benevolent task.

Mrs. Burbank Felton, of whom I have spoken, is, as I have said, a speaking medium, differing in character from either of the two ladies to whom I have just alluded, inasmuch as she, I believe, always speaks in the trance state. I am told that this lady obtains at times some very remarkable manifestations. The spirits of friends and relatives take possession of and entrance her, and she carries conviction by the accuracy of her delineation of voice and manner. I was introduced to Mrs. Felton by Mr. C., a gentleman who holds an official position connected with the port of Boston, but as she was indisposed I had not the opportunity of testing her mediumship. Mr. C., however, has had many proofs of it, and he related to me a very remarkable story which, though somewhat lengthy, I venture to think will prove interesting to my readers, as it answers a question frequently put—Why don't these spirits tell us something useful?

On one of his casual visits to Mrs. Felton, a spirit speaking through her, introduced himself to Mr. C., and gave his name Ezekiel Webster, a well-known American lawyer, and brother to the celebrated statesman, Daniel Webster. After some general conversation, Ezekiel took leave of Mr. C., saying in a courteous way that he was happy to have made his acquaintance, and added "If you are ever in want of my assistance and advice come to me, and I will give it to you." Some time after this interview it so happened that Mr. C. became involved in a law suit, arising

out of the following circumstances:—The firm of J. B. and Co., of Boston, discovered a guano island in the Carribean Sea, and sent several vessels there to load. The Venezuelan Government hearing of this, sent an armed ship to take possession, and drove them away. Soon after this event a company was formed, who leased all the Islands in the Carribean Sea from the Government, and J. B. and Co. were invited to take a lease from the company of the island they had already worked, which they agreed to do, and gave a surety bond for the due fulfilment of the conditions of their lease, and to this bond Mr. C. became a party. One of the conditions was that J. B. and Co. should carry away, within a given time, 10,000 tons of guano, and pay five dollars per ton royalty. When J. B. and Co. had obtained about 4,000 tons, the island was exhausted, and they called upon the company either to give them another island to work upon or to cancel their lease, which the company refused to do, and insisted on payment for the stipulated number of 10,000 tons. The defence was that the company had by implication guaranteed that J. B. and Co. could obtain 10,000 tons, and in equity they could not be called upon to pay royalty on a greater quantity than they had actually carried away. Mr. C. being sued on his bond bethought himself of Ezekiel Webster's promise, and determined to seek another interview with him, which he obtained by visiting Mrs. Felton. She soon passed into the trance state, and assumed the official manner and importance of the lawyer. Mr. C. stated the case as I have given it, upon which the following conversation took place:—WEBSTER,—“Was the Island uninhabited when J. B. and Co. first took possession of it?”—“Yes!”—“How far is it from the Continent?”—“30 miles!” “My brother Daniel is better acquainted with international law than I am, allow me to ask his opinion on one point, and then I will give you mine.”

In a few minutes he returned and continued, “My brother says I am right; the defence you make is a fair one, and ought to prevail, unless there is some clause in the lease which cuts it off, and that I cannot pronounce upon without seeing and carefully examining the contents. It is hardly necessary, however, to do this, as the lease itself is a nullity, and therefore the lessors can neither recover under it for what you did take away, nor, of course, for what you did not. They had no title, and could not give one. They were, in fact, only undertaking to lease to you your own property, from which you had been driven by violence. By a law of the United States, any of her citizens who may discover guano on an island not occupied, and lying without the maritime jurisdiction of any other nation, has a right to take possession thereof, and to hold possession against

all subsequent comers till he has exported all the existing guano upon it. Now, you discovered the island in question, and were peaceably and legally employed in carrying the deposit away until interrupted and driven away by the armed force of Venezuela. But they did not own the island, and therefore had not any right to interfere with you, nor, of course, any right, after taking possession, to lease or to sell it; nor had the guano company any right to convey because their own title was worthless. You have, therefore, taken away nothing but your own property, and the guano company, instead of having a claim on J. B. & Co., are bound to repay to J. B. & Co. whatever sum of money they have exacted under their lease."

Mr. C. then observed—"But it will be said that J. B. & Co. waived their rights by accepting the lease."

WEBSTER.—"Perhaps so. The answer, however, is, that all parties appear to have acted in ignorance of their rights, but that is no reason why the party having rights should be deprived of them for the benefit of those who had none."

Mr. C. showed this opinion to his own lawyer, who, without knowing the source from whence it was obtained, said it was excellent and sound law. Mr. C. accordingly acted upon it—put the company at defiance, and they have not troubled him further in the matter.

I am about to relate several anecdotes which may be called "Curiosities of Spiritualism." They have been told to me by serious, intelligent, and highly respectable people, and I readily yield to them as implicit a belief as I expect to obtain from those who know me when I speak of my own personal experiences:—Mr. Daniel Farrar, who is at the head of a leading and wealthy commercial firm in Boston, gave me a history of his conversion to Spiritualism. He had, he said, given close attention to the subject for several years; a member of the orthodox Church he opposed Spiritualism for two years, and at length yielded to overwhelming evidence of its reality.

The Rev. Mr. Willis, who was educated at Harvard University, and who is now residing at Coldwater, Michigan, is a medium of remarkable power, and was a frequent visitor at Mr. Farrar's house. Invited on one occasion to stay there over night, he consented on the condition that Mr. Farrar would sleep in the same room with him, which he did. During the night all sorts of disturbances took place, their clothes were strewed about in all directions, and in the morning they found almost every article of furniture in the room had been moved out of its place. Mr. Willis had carefully folded up a small miniature which he usually wore attached to a gold chain, and had placed it for safety in his waistcoat pocket. In the morning the chain was missing, after

a minute search it could nowhere be found, and Mr. Willis left for his home without it. On a subsequent visit some weeks after Mr. Farrar assured me that he saw this chain descend, as it were, from the ceiling of the room in which they were seated, and though no visible agent was present, he saw it placed carefully around Mr. Willis's neck.

A similar occurrence was related to me recently by Mr. C., of New Orleans, who is at present residing in London. Accompanied by his wife and a well-known medium, they were walking a little way out of the city in a quiet lane, when Mrs. C. exclaimed, "My wedding ring has just been taken from my finger," after a search they all saw it trundling along like a hoop in the road before them. Mr. C. ran after it, picked it up, and restored it to his wife. After their arrival at home, Mrs. C. again missed her ring, and they were amazed to see it suspended in the air in a distant part of a large room out of their reach. It gradually approached them, and as Mr. C. held his wife's hand, the ring was, without any visible agency, gently deposited on the back of his hand.

Mrs. Kennison, of Quincey, near Boston, told me that after the persecuting spirit with which the Rev. Mr. Willis was treated by the students of Harvard College, led on by Professors Felton and Eustis (which is a well-known episode in the history of American Spiritualism), he had a long and serious illness, during which time he was carefully nursed by several ladies who sympathised with him, as well as by the spirits; and, among other very curious manifestations, when Mrs. Lord, of Boston, and another were sitting in his room in the third story, Mr. Willis's bed was suddenly covered with a quantity of real flowers which came through the open window, and they were gathered up by spirit hands into one bouquet, and presented to him.

Mrs. Staats, of New York, related to me an incident which occurred to her long before she became a medium and knew anything of Spiritualism. She said she went on a visit to her mother, who resides in a distant part of the country, and took with her the daguerreotype likeness of her two brothers, who had but then recently emigrated to California. On presenting them to her mother, she was greatly surprised and mortified to find that both portraits were obliterated, and on the following morning, on looking again, she was equally puzzled and delighted at finding them restored.

This remained a mystery to her, until one day after she had become a writing medium, she got messages through her own hand from her brothers, who were drowned by the wreck of the vessel in which they sailed, explaining that their bodies were interred on the day she was showing the portraits, and that their

spirits stood in the way, and shadowed the plates so as to make them appear blank.

Mrs. Lewis, the wife of a merchant in Boston, who takes an active interest in the spread of Spiritualism, gave me the history of her first experience. One evening Mr. Lewis, her sister Mary, herself, and some friends, none of whom knew anything of Spiritualism, were engaged in playing cards, when suddenly Mary started up from the table, walked about the room in an excited and very unusual way, and declared she was Esther—a sister residing with her husband in California. Scattering the cards, she assumed the very manners and voice of her sister Esther, and announced to them that she had just left the body and had entered the spirit world.

The whole party were greatly disturbed by this unlooked-for exhibition, and thought that Mary must have become insane. They found, however, that she was in what they afterwards knew to be the trance state, and that the spirit of Esther was speaking through her; during which she gave exact particulars of her illness and death, which were subsequently confirmed by the receipt of letters from Esther's husband some weeks afterwards.

DYING OUT.

It is asserted in many quarters, with much confidence, that Spiritualism is "dying out." One of our religious exchanges, the *World's Crisis*, bears the following testimony on the subject, which is no doubt true:—

SPIRITUALISM IN THE CHURCHES.—While many, who are not posted with the facts, think that Spiritualism is not advancing, it is a sad truth that its doctrines are spreading very rapidly, and are being embraced by large numbers of church members, and many clergymen, who have not yet identified themselves with Spiritualism.

A writer in the same paper from which the above is taken, in his alarm at the certain prevalence of Spiritualism, prophecies that Spiritualists will become a persecuting power, putting to death or starving to terms all who do not accept their belief. He says:—

It is manifest that by these oppressive measures, accompanied with a sore persecution, the opponents of Spiritualism will be reduced, principally, to those who accept the Bible and its religion, and will stand by it unto death, if need be.

Our friend seems to see things exactly reversed. It is well known to all calm and intelligent minds, that the Church has generally been a persecuting power according to the extent of her ability; while a distinguishing characteristic of Spiritualism is the broadest toleration.—*Herald of Progress*.

THE SPIRITUAL SIGHT OF ANIMALS.

HERE are some remarks, with an extract from Swedenborg, in a recent number of the *Crisis*, U.S.A., on this curious subject, which may serve to open out the question to our readers, and be thus the means of collecting facts and opinions in further elucidation of it. A correspondent of the *Crisis* asks the following questions:—

If beasts have no spiritual sight, as stated in the *True Christian Religion*, No. 64, how could Balaam's ass see the angel that stood in the way with a drawn sword?

Again, if animals are substantial spiritual forms in the spiritual world, and consequently act and see, do they lose their spiritual sight by being clothed in materiality?

The editor says in answer, that—

In reading over the whole of the paragraph, it appears rather that Swedenborg means to say, that beasts have not the same kind or degree of spiritual sight that men have. Men have the faculty of spiritual presence by virtue of thought, memory and affection. Swedenborg says: "The reason that angels and spirits have such presence, is, because every affection of love, and thence every thought of the understanding, is in space without space, and in time without time: for any one can think of a brother, relative or friend in the Indies, and then have him as it were present to him, in like manner he may be affected with their love by recollection. Such presence has each sight of man, both intellectual and corporeal, because his spirit sees through his eyes; but no beast has similar presence, *because they have not spiritual sight.*" A careful reading of the subject treated of, conveys the impression to our mind, that all that Swedenborg intends to say is, that beasts cannot have a presence except by actual contact, because they have not those faculties which cause presence irrespective of time and space. Animals cannot rise above as man can, because they have not the *same kind or degree* of spiritual sight.

Concerning the souls of brutes, Swedenborg says in *A. E.* 1200, 1201, 1202: "Inasmuch as there is such a similitude between the animals appearing in the spiritual world and the animals in this world that no difference can be discerned, and the former derive their existence from the affections of the angels of heaven, and from the cupidities of the spirits of hell, it follows that natural affectives and cupidities are their souls, and that these being clothed with a body, are, in effigy, animals. The soul of beasts, considered in itself is spiritual; for affection, whatsoever may be its quality, whether good or evil, is spiritual, for it is a derivation of some love, and derives its origin from the heat and light which proceed from the Lord as a sun, and whatever proceeds thence is spiritual. It is, however, to be observed, that the souls of beasts are not spiritual in that degree in which the souls of men are, but they are spiritual in an inferior degree; for there are given degrees of spirituality, and the affections of the inferior degree although viewed in their origin they are spiritual, are yet to be called natural, they are to be so called, because they are similar to the affections of the natural man. The difference betwixt men and beasts, is as between waking and dreaming, and as between light and shade. Man is spiritual and at the same time natural, whereas a beast is not spiritual but natural. Man is endowed with will and understanding, and his will is the receptacle of the heat of heaven, which is love, and his understanding is the receptacle of the light of heaven, which is wisdom; but a beast is not endowed with will and understanding, but instead of will has affection, and instead of understanding, science."

From these statements it appears that the case of Balaam's ass seeing the angel does not come within the author's meaning, when he distinguishes the

difference of spiritual sight and presence with man and with beasts. Man can be present with those who, *in space*, are afar off; brutes only when near or in contact. Thus the ass could see the angel because the angel was there: it was spiritual sight, indeed, but it was on a natural plane,—unlike that sight and presence which overleaps all distance, and rises above the conditions of time and space.

We see no difficulty in accounting for the ass seeing the angel, as beasts derive their life through man, and thus the angel could easily cause his presence to be seen. We know that animals have singular presentiments about them of coming storms and other convulsions in nature; and it is also said, have a decided perception and apparent dread of the presence of spiritual beings.

The second question, being involved in the first, is thereby answered. The souls of beasts are the same in both worlds, and in both have no spiritual sight extending beyond the mere contact of objects presented to their senses.

LOUIS NAPOLEON.

It is a fact, more or less widely known, that Louis Napoleon has been, ever since its advent in France, deeply interested in the phenomena and philosophy of Modern Spiritualism. Frequent sittings are held at the Tuileries, and Eugenie has herself become developed as a medium.

We are led to this remark by the following extract from a work lately published in England, entitled "The Early Life of Louis Napoleon," written by an English lady, in relation to a prophecy given to Queen Hortense, in 1834, or 1835:—

"One day, when she was residing in Arenberg, the conversation turned on mesmerism, on those prodigies of divination before which human reason recoils in affright and astonishment, although their authenticity is, in some cases at least, undoubted. The Queen was anxious to put it to the test—to see if any hand possessed the power of raising before her that mysterious curtain that veils the future from our eyes.

"Dr. Bailly, who happened that day to be on a visit to the chateau, chose for his subject a negress, named Malvina, who was in the service of the illustrious exile. He mesmerised her, and placed her in communication with the Queen, who demanded if she could then see her son—the Prince being that day at the camp of Thun.

"On receiving a reply in the affirmative, she next enquired what he was then doing and about to do?

"'I see him,' replied Malvina, 'surrounded by soldiers, who crowd round him, shouting and brandishing their sabres.'

"'Is it in Switzerland?'

"'No; but the people speak German.'

"'What more do you see?'

"'Alas! all is over—he is taken prisoner.'

"'And whither are they conducting him?'

"'To America.'

"'Shall I follow him there?'

"'No; illness will prevent you doing so.'

"'And what then—can you see nothing more?'

"'Heavens! what do I behold?' suddenly resumed Malvina, as though dazzled by a vivid burst of light; 'he is here all-powerful; the sovereign of a great nation!'

"'Of what nation?' exclaimed the Queen. 'Of the French?'

"'Yes,' replied Malvina; 'he is in France.'

"The negress was not mistaken in her first prediction. Two months afterwards the Prince went to Strasbourg, was there taken prisoner and sent to America, whither the Queen, having been taken ill, was unable to accompany him. As to the second prophecy, our readers can judge for themselves how far it has been accomplished."—*Banner of Light*.

PRE-EXISTENCE.

THE doctrine of the pre-existence of the human soul has been a subject of speculation and belief from very remote times. Plato was the most distinguished of its defenders among the ancients; and he represents Socrates as making it the starting-point of his argument for the soul's immortality. Several of the Jewish Kabbalists and Christian Fathers entertained this belief, which also enters largely into many of the oriental creeds. And, as Bishop Warburton says:—"The idea of a pre-existence has been espoused by many learned and ingenious men in every age, as bidding fair to resolve many difficulties." Among the moderns, many of the learned have regarded it with favour. Dr. Henry Moore believed and Glanvil defended it. Southey confesses, "I have a strong and lively faith in a state of continued consciousness from this stage of existence, and that we shall recover the consciousness of some lower stages through which we may previously have passed seems to me not improbable." Wordsworth has illustrated this faith in the most magnificent of his odes—*Intimations of Immortality from recollections of Early Childhood*. He tells us that—

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.

The new-born child comes "not in entire forgetfulness, and not in utter nakedness, but trailing clouds of glory." "Heaven lies about him in his infancy;" and earth is—

Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.

But soon he feels "that there hath past away a glory from the earth." The things that he hath seen he now can see no more. "Shades of the prison-house begin to close upon the growing boy." Daily he travels farther from the East, and though still the Youth—

By the vision splendid
Is in his way attended,

Yet,— At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

Nature, "even with something of a Mother's mind,"

— doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he hath known,
And that imperial palace whence he came.

Early, he shapes to himself some little plan or chart of life, and later, he fits his tongue "to dialogues of business, love, or strife." The parts he plays on this our stage of life are severally thrown

aside, but "O joy! that in our embers is something that doth live." Not, however, for "delight and liberty, the simple creed of Childhood," though these indeed are "most worthy to be blest," doth the poet raise—

The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Did tremble, like a guilty thing surprised:
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet the master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence

Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Tennyson, in his *Two Voices*, has addressed himself to the same high argument. Like Wordsworth, he intimates that, at times, there is within the soul a consciousness of this, its ante-natal state; but he goes farther, and reasons that were it otherwise—were there a total and universal oblivion of it, no conclusive argument from this could be drawn against its truth. He asks—

Yet how should I for certain hold,
Because my memory is so cold,
That I first was in human mould?
* * * * *
As old mythologies relate,
Some draught of Lethe might await
The slipping through from state to state. .

As here we find in trances, men
Forget the dream that happens then,
Until they fall in trance again.

So might we, if our state were such
As one before, remember much,
For those two likes might meet and touch.

Moreover something is, or seems,
That teaches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—

Of something felt, like something here;
Of something done, I know not where;
Such as no language may declare.

There are communications from spirits to persons in the magnetic state, who could see and converse with them, which directly affirm the soul's pre-existence.* The Monadial theory of Leibnitz again is substantially an affirmation of the same doctrine in another form, and with an attempt at a more scientific and exact expression of it.

The doctrine of re-incarnation, though presenting the idea under a very different phase, may be regarded as another form of the same belief; and, however strange and foreign it may seem to the modern and western mind, there have been many singular experiences which appear to countenance it, and which have led individuals at various times to adopt it. It is probably out of such experiences that the belief has sprung. We are told that Pythagoras professed to have a distinct recollection of more than one previous incarnation on earth; and that he even went so far as to specify the names and characters he had sustained.†

Sir E. Bulwer Lytton remarks, "How strange it is that at times a feeling comes over us, as we gaze upon certain places, which associates the scene either with some dim-remembered and dream-like images of the past, or with a prophetic and fearful omen of the future."

Sometimes we find an illustration of this remark in a quarter where we should least expect it: thus Mr. Dickens, in describing a scene he witnessed on his first sight of Ferrara, says:—

If I had been murdered there on some former life I could not have seemed to remember the place more thoroughly, or with more emphatic chilling of the blood; and the real remembrance of it acquired in that minute is so strengthened by the imaginary recollection, that I hardly think I could forget it.

And Sir Walter Scott, in his diary, has the following passage:—

Yesterday, at dinner time, I was strongly haunted by what I would call the sense of *pre-existence*, in a confirmed idea that nothing which passed was said for the first time; that the same topics had been discussed, and the same persons had stated the same opinions on them The sensation was so strong as to resemble what is called a *mirage* in the desert, or a *calenture* on board a ship.

Of course all experiences of the kind we have instanced are popularly set down to "imagination" or "delusion," and the unfortunate individuals who are subjects of them are so compassionate that it is no wonder that many shrink from all relation of them. Some physiologists think they are to be explained on the theory of "The duality of the brain." It is not our present purpose to discuss either the scientific or the popular theory. We are content to state the question without

* See for instance, Cahagnet's *Celestial Telegraph*, pp. 116, 117, 118.

† See article, "Pre-existence of Souls," in Welby's *Mysteries of Life, Death, and Futurity*. Reviewed in the last number of the Magazine.

becoming its advocate. We neither affirm nor deny its truth, but wait and hope for more light. In the meanwhile, we would ask the reader to consider whether Spiritualism may not throw some light on these psychological states—these apparent reminiscences of an earlier existence, which seem to lie at the foundation of the belief we have been considering.

Swedenborg affirms, and his averments are confirmed by other seers, that spirits can so infuse their own thoughts and feelings into the minds of those who are subject to their influence that such persons know not but that these thoughts and feelings are their own; the self-originated and proper product of their mental operations and individual consciousness. Now, if this be so, have we not here a key to the difficulty? A spirit *en rapport* with a susceptible person or medium (and all are more or less open to spiritual influx), recalls scenes, characters, and incidents of his earth-life, or perceives things present, or, it may be as with clairvoyants, takes cognizance of certain things past or future, and these perceptions, thoughts, or memories, by a natural spiritual law are transferred or reflected on the surface of the mind under conditions of receptivity, and are regarded by the individual as evidence of his own prior individual cognition. Having no relation to his experience in the present life, he concludes that they are reminiscences of a former existence. So also a spirit's thoughts and feelings concerning the spirit-world and his experience therein may be reflected in like manner; though, we should expect, not so vivid and distinct as in the former case, as minds on the earth have not images of spiritual as they have of material things, nor language in which they could be properly expressed.

We put this forward only as an hypothesis, which will serve its turn if it leads to a better one; and in the hope that it may lead to disclosures of individual experiences which will help in solution of these hard problems of human nature. Spiritualism, if we rightly study it, may help us to see many of these "old-world questions" under new or unaccustomed phases, and, perhaps, eventually to recast our judgment of them under more favourable opportunities for arriving at correct conclusions. Let us at least encourage the frank, outspoken, and wise utterance of genuine experiences. Let us deal honestly by ourselves, by each other, and by all God's facts; most of all with the facts of the soul—with that mysterious hand-writing of God written on the walls of the inner temple of Humanity. While men of science with laudable application are exploring the mysteries of the universe, we would seek humbly and reverently to explore some of the divine mysteries in our own spiritual nature. Even if wholly unsuccessful in objective result (as Mr. Buckle tells us all

such investigations must be), the attempt is one worthy of those high faculties with which God has endowed us, and, if made in the right spirit, it (like every true effort) will carry with it its own reward.

T. S.

A DREAM.

THE *Monde Illustré*, a Paris paper, in its number of the 16th February last, gives the following:—

"It is a year ago that the distinguished operatic cantatrice, Madame Anna de la Grange (Countess Stankovich by marriage), was fulfilling a professional engagement at New York. Invited to go from thence to Boston, it was a question which mode of conveyance should be adopted—steam-boat or railway. Her husband inclined to the former, thinking it the less fatiguing.

"At breakfast, on the day when they were to start, their mode of transit was again debated between them and their medical attendant, Dr. Gaillardet. The voyage by water was agreed upon. But, hearing this decision, the lady's daughter, a child of ten years, burst into tears. 'What is the matter?'—'Oh, mamma, don't go by the boat.' 'Why not?'—'I dreamt last night that the boat was struck by another, and sunk to the bottom; and I saw you under the water.'

"The doctor tried, by pleasantry, to do away with the effect produced by the child's dream, but the mother, moved by her tears and sobs, said—'But why should we cause her so much trouble? The idea of our going by the steamer may make her ill. We will go by railway.' The doctor laughed at what he called weakness; but that evening they started by the train.

"The next morning the Count rose early to take a stroll through the streets of Boston. He returned to his wife much excited—'The boat we would have come by yesterday has been struck by another, and foundered by the shock; thirty passengers are drowned.'"

Their child's dream had saved them.

Beautifully and sweetly passed away the spirit of two little girls of my acquaintance, a few days ago. They were schoolmates, and one had lost a little sister. "Mamma," said the darling child, "I shall die to-morrow." Sure enough, on the morrow she drooped and faded. Just before she closed her eyes to earth, she whispered softly to her parent; "Oh, mamma, I wish you and papa could go with me. I see the beautiful angels all around me, and sister is not dead, for I see her now, with the angels;" and thus she passed away. The other longed to die. "Don't cry, mamma, I am going to die and be a little angel." Hopefully, joyfully was this said, while above her bent her anguished parent. "It is all right, mamma." Angels gathered her to their embrace, and she gladly went with them. Are not such beautiful scenes in helpless childhood proofs of spirit presence? Do they not shew that beautiful angels are ever around us in life as in death?—*The Rising Tide*.

MY FIRST SÉANCE WITH MR. HOME.

THOUGH I have been on terms of intimacy with Mr. Home for some years, and have heard and read of all the wonderful things which occur in his presence, yet this 19th June is the first time I have come to see them for myself. It has not been because I either disbelieved them, or thought them of no importance, for I quite believed them, and thought them of very great importance. Having been, however, in the habit of hearing from friends of all that was occurring, I was fully satisfied with their accounts, and did not think that they were so much beneath me in observation, that it was necessary for my own eyes to convince me. I take no credit to myself for this, for it is mainly a consequence of my experience. I remember about 25 years ago, when I first heard of mesmerism, and of its psychological wonders, I committed the folly of saying that I did not believe a word of it, and since I had on that occasion, to surrender at discretion on seeing for myself, I have made much fewer similar mistakes. Since that time, I have pursued this and kindred subjects, and I may fairly say that I can now readily believe in much more than I once thought possible. I have found this, at all events, convenient, for I have not had so often to find myself at variance with facts, which is always a painful position to be in; and, besides, it has opened up to me a new world of spiritual forces, which, though generally ignored, I have found to account for many of the strangest, and otherwise incomprehensible chapters of human history.

I had on two or three occasions, through Mr. Squire and other mediums, seen phenomena as wonderful as those which I now witnessed in the presence of Mr. Home. I had seen nearly all the wonderful things so admirably described in the *Cornhill Magazine*, and in the letter of Dr. Gully; I had also been present when others of even a more powerful kind were done, and which were ably described by Dr. Blank, at page 161 of the 1st volume of the *Spiritual Magazine*. I had several times seen, both in London and Paris, direct writing by invisible power, on paper placed beyond mortal contact, and I was well convinced also of the alleged power of mediums to float in the air, by having had one come down on my chest, as well as having on other occasions had hold of his hand, whilst he was floating about in the room. I did not, therefore, on this evening care to disturb myself and others by taking those precautions which would have been necessary if I were the President of the Royal Society, and were about to make a conclusive report to that illustrious body of inquirers into physics. I did not doubt, but I sat, and saw, and heard, and felt, and made notes. There were eight of us, all well known to me,

and some of them known wherever the English language is spoken. We were in the drawing-room of a house in Cornwall Terrace, Regent's Park, and we sat round a large loo table, and commenced talking. Curiously enough, one having said that Professor Faraday was coming on the following Monday to a *séance*, and speculating as to his guardian spirit not allowing him to be easily convinced, there were at once very loud knocks on the table in affirmation of that proposition. I was sitting next to my wife on her right hand, and immediately afterwards I felt my left leg gently touched, in a position where it was impossible for Mr. Home to have reached it. There then began a gentle but deep vibration of the table, chairs, and floor, till all the room was shaking violently, during which the table rose about 10 inches, the trembling continuing all the-time. The table began to rise on the opposite side to where Mr. Home was sitting, and it was clearly out of his power to have so raised it. Mr. Home's chair was quietly moved back, away from the table, about three feet, and whilst there the dresses of my wife and of the lady next to her were both pulled, and so strongly that I could see them dragging down. I also felt my wife's dress whilst being so pulled, and there was a powerful force expended in the act. At this time Mr. Home was fully six feet off, and both from distance, and from his being in full view, I could see that it was done by no force of his. Mr. Home now held the accordion in his right hand beside his chair, and it at once began to play. He held it by the bottom, the keys being on the top, and they were therefore out of his reach. It was impossible that he could touch them. I carefully examined the instrument, opening the slide beneath the keys, and I found it to be a common instrument, with only the usual mechanism of the keys. There was nothing inside it. I looked steadily at it, and at the hand and fingers with which he held it. There it was, being pulled up and down, and discoursing sweet sounds, whilst his hand was stationary, and his fingers motionless. I could see above and beneath the instrument, but there was no visible cause for its motion, nor for the opening and shutting of the keys which caused the music. When it ceased, my wife asked if it could not be played in her hand, and immediately the instrument emitted three sounds, which we took to mean that it would have much pleasure in trying. It was accordingly given to her, and whilst she was holding it, she said she felt one of her fingers being touched. Immediately afterwards the table was raised about a foot steadily from the floor. As there was no sound from the accordion in her hands, she returned it to Mr. Home, but it was taken from his hand immediately, and given back to her, and whilst in her right hand it began to play. She felt it distinctly lifted up and

drawn forcibly down, and she did not and could not touch the keys, which, however, must necessarily be opened to make a sound. In Mr. Home's hands a beautiful tune was now played, during which we heard what has been so often described, the full notes gradually decreasing till they died away into the thinnest streaks of sound. By three quickly repeated notes it was promised that the instruments should play the tune of the other evening, representing "The Two Lives," the one in this world, the other in that which follows. The first, or this world's life, was represented by discords grating painfully on the ear, and which I thought did but scant justice to a world which, though capable of improvement, still has some rich harmonies within its depths. In mercy to our ears, the first life did not last long, and was then succeeded by the second, which was made up of beautiful soft angel music, such as I had never heard. It played for several minutes, swelling into rich sounds, of which the sweetness was enchanting to the ear, and gradually changed into the dear tune of "Home, sweet Home."

What more appropriate and happy view of the second life could be given in musical sounds than this of its being home; and what a sweet sermon on the relative values of the two lives! I believe it was received more solemnly, and yet more thankfully by all who were present, from our knowing the sickness "even unto death" of one of the party, the youngest and the happiest in her bright longings for this second life. It would be almost blasphemy to ask in her presence what is the good of Spiritualism. Such a question would not occur to a good man, and could not be asked by a wise one. The mere man of science who measures human souls by mathematics, would be out of place in such a scene, and had I not been too happily engaged with my own thoughts, I should have felt glad that we were troubled with none such. I did not during this last performance scrutinize the instrument further than to see that it was, bottom upwards, held in Mr. Home's right hand, his other hand being upon the table, as were the hands of all the other persons present, and I am not aware of any natural means by which an accordion can be played under such conditions. I do not doubt for another reason, however, having once had an accordion play in my own hands, when I know that I did not do it. I also know that Lord Lyndhurst, and many other public men whom I could name, have had a similar experience.

But now the table rises again a clear foot from the floor, and there stands, not quietly, but strongly undulating, still so that I was able to make the following note on my paper resting on the table, whilst it was at its full height:—"Table rose a foot. Count 10. I wrote this whilst up and undulating." It then

gently descended to the floor again. We now changed places according to directions, and a gentleman became my right-hand neighbour, who, in a minute after, said that he saw a hand which he believed to be his son's. I did not see it, nor did I see three fingers which my wife shortly after saw; but in answer to a question, I had three taps on my knee as from a hand, still with no such distinctness as to make me sure what it was. At this time, several at once said they saw a light cloudy appearance dart across the room, but, being behind me, I saw nothing of it.

In one corner of the room, near where we were sitting, was a shrine with several Indian idols of bronze. Suddenly, there was a commotion among them, and a crash, and a large one was thrown down, and brought with some violence and noise under the table. There it appeared as if it was in the hands of some vigorous power, and presently we found a jingling of some metallic substance against it, which afterwards proved to be a metal ornamental canopy, which had been unscrewed from the back of the idol, and with which questions were now answered by knocking them together. In like manner, loud knocks were made in answer to questions, by rattling the idol against the floor. A remark was made as to the want of respect thus indicated, and at once a number of jubilant raps were produced, by again knocking the two parts of the idol together. Two or three times the idol appeared, pushing up inside of the table cloth, and twice it made its appearance naked above the table, and gently reached the ground again. Some flowers were brought from the shrine, and placed in the hand of each person present. Our present consisted of a rose and several pinks. I felt the rose placed in my hand under the table, all other hands being visible and on the table.

Several times during the evening we all perceived a cool air pervading the table, and which it was impossible not to notice. The accordion was now placed on the floor, and all hands on the table, when it was heard to sound clearly several times, but no tune was played. It then tried to get from the floor to the table, but was not able to accomplish the whole journey, and fell gently back to the floor. The table was now again raised clear from the ground, both my feet being on its pediment, and pressing heavily downwards the whole time. The resistance and upward steady movement of the table were strangely curious, as was its careful quiet descent, my feet still pressing on it, and yet it reached the ground without noise. There was now a general rattle among the idols, and several very loud knocks, and then came an end of a very interesting evening, during which I had seen and heard what was sufficient to convince me that those are wrong who deny the possibility of these phenomena. How they

are to be accounted for is another matter, which may be discussed with many honest differences of opinion; but that they exist is not a matter of doubt, but of certainty. There are some well-meaning persons who say that they are done by the devil; but I saw no signs on this evening of any wickedness, either in the work, or in the persons who looked on. For myself, I took up much the same attitude as I should do at a scientific lecture, illustrated with experiments and diagrams, and I perceived no special influence but that of a strong desire to observe the facts.

As to the facts being impossible, because they do not square with the ideas of spirit and of matter which are current in the Royal Society, that is not my affair, for I did not make either the facts, or the opinions which find them so inconvenient. I do but state that which I have seen, and if I have done so clearly, that is my only wish. Facts will always take care of themselves, and those are the most wise to whom they administer no reproof. There is another reason why I hope to have enlarged the circle of observers, by my description of this evening's phenomena. It is impossible for many that they should see what I have seen, and so far as they can believe my testimony, the necessity for their personal seeing is avoided. Many things must be taken on the evidence of others. "*Non cuivis contingit adire Corinthum.*" It does not happen to every one to go to Corinth, and so they who can't go themselves, must take the account of those who have been there. A certain few of a peculiar turn of mind, common to all ages, cannot accept the testimony of others, and they are best left alone, till an opportunity offers of convincing them by a mode suitable to their peculiar weakness. It is not yet fashionable to believe in these impossible things, and as some one must begin and put up with the necessary ridicule, I willingly submit my name for as much as can be made to stick to it.

Hampstead.

W. M. WILKINSON.

ABSTRACTION.—Those who are profoundly abstracted, are often magnetized by the angels. Not merely as an agreeable fancy, but rather as a solemn and beautiful reality, do I entertain and express the thought. Some higher intelligence wins the rapt soul away from earth, and it dwells above and blends with the Infinite. In the charmed hours when we are able to retire from the dull sphere of grosser life, we think most deeply and truly. Only when earthly sounds are hushed, when earthly scenes grow dim and then invisible, do we ascend to the highest heaven of thought. Communion with external nature; the investigation of her interior laws; the consciousness of the still higher spiritual realities that surround us, and the soul's true worship, are the subjects and exercises best adapted to induce this state of mind. When wholly absorbed with the material objects and events of time, the mind is fettered in its thought. Chained down to earth by a material magnetism, it is difficult to rise above the cramped plane of artificial life. For this reason the mind's noblest monuments have ever been wrought out from invisible worlds, where, veiled for ever, are the sources of its highest inspiration.—S. B. BRITTON.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSION.

By A. E. NEWTON, Boston, U. S. A.

THE idea of Unlimited Progression is attractive to most people. There is an almost universal longing for *something better*—a yearning for something conceived of, yet unattained, which predisposes to such an idea. The common experience of individuals in the present life, and the current history of the race, seem to foretoken and illustrate the doctrine.

We are individually introduced into conscious existence at zero, and thence advance through successive stages of growth, unaware of any limit to what we may acquire. We see nations, which a few centuries since slowly emerged from barbaric ignorance, now making rapid and accelerating advances in science, refinement, and the useful arts. New discoveries and cunning inventions are springing forth day by day. None of us can set bounds to this progress.

And since its mainspring is in an insatiable desire of the human mind to *know* and to *enjoy*, the inquiry seems rational. "Why should it not continue, in some form, so long as mind shall continue to exist?"

With modern Spiritualists the doctrine of Progression is a favourite one. But they, like others, are not agreed as to its nature and methods. Many have but vague and questionable notions respecting it. Some hold that all human beings are inevitably destined to eternal advancement in good or in happiness, by virtue of an innate and irrepressible power operative within themselves, superior to volition. Others think progress depends, in some measure at least, upon choice, and that there is such a thing as progression from good to bad, and from bad to worse, at least through an indefinite period of existence—ending in—what?

These are important questions. Let us not be satisfied with an answer on the authority of any man or spirit. Let us rather examine them in the light of the authoritative laws written in our own constitutions and experience.

Every visible living organism is, doubtless, the embodiment of an invisible life-principle. These life-principles differ, of course, in their qualities and potencies, as visible organisms differ in forms, functions, and duration. The life-force of an annual plant, for example, expends itself in a single season; that of an oak may continue to expand for centuries. The life-principle of an insect may exhaust itself in a few days or hours; that of an elephant may flourish for a century. All these reach at last the

limit of their power of expansion or progression, when decay of the external organism succeeds.*

The animal life-principle, or *soul* of man—that which is distinctively human in him, constituting him an individual—seems to follow the same law, so far at least as the earthly body is concerned. The latter reaches a period of maturity, or highest development; after which decay and dissolution follow. Who can say that the same may not be the case with the spirit-body—the *soul*? Though this may continue to exist and to expand even for ages in the after-life, who can positively assert that it may not, like the natural body, reach a limit somewhere? (Observe that I am speaking of the human *soul*—not of the *spirit*, properly so called.) This question is asked rather to provoke careful inquiry than to give a definite answer here.

Let us turn to another thought. Two kinds or modes of progression are readily conceivable. One may be termed *continuous*; the other *ascending*. The first is a progressive expansion of the powers and capacities pertaining to any one degree or quality of life; the second, an ascension from a lower to a higher degree of life.

The familiar example of the caterpillar and butterfly affords a partial illustration of both. This creature progresses first from an apparently lifeless egg to a full-grown creeping caterpillar. This is *continuous* progression. Reaching its limit on that plane of life, a transformation takes place, and forth comes the winged, soaring butterfly. Here is *ascending* progression—advance to a higher grade of existence.

Man is capable, at least, of a double life, and hence of realizing both these modes of progression.

First, he may advance in the development of all that pertains to his strictly human life-principle or natural selfhood. This includes not only physical development from infancy to maturity, but all possible achievements of human intellect in all departments of science, art, ornament, luxury, and social improvement. Perhaps none may tell what possibilities are yet latent in the merely human life-principle or “soul” of man. These we may expect will be progressively manifested in the life of the race on earth, and in the experience of individual souls in the after-life.

Secondly, man may rise out of the first or “natural” plane

* These life-principles, when set free from decaying organisms, doubtless continue to exist; perhaps for a season they remain individual entities—some suppose they may be always such. The more probable theory seems to be that they are eventually absorbed by higher forms of life; and thus man, being the highest form of all, may combine within himself the elementary life-principles of all creatures below him. In this way he is capable of becoming a universe in himself.

of existence, to the enjoyment of a *higher degree or quality of life*. This, in distinction from the *human*, may be called the *divine* life; or, in distinction from the "natural," it may be termed the *spiritual* degree of life.

These distinctions are not fanciful or arbitrary. Let us endeavour to get clear ideas of them. All life-principles are, no doubt, primarily *loves*; that is, life of any kind is a manifestation through matter of a subtle essence or potency, which, for want of a better term, we may call a *love*. It attracts and draws to it that which is like itself. Loves, then, must be of different qualities. The basic element of any individualized being must be a self-centering, self-preservative love. Nothing else can constitute or maintain individuality. On the contrary, the peculiar element of the Universal Being must be universal, all-comprehending love.

This is the radical distinction between self-love and divine love. The one cannot be, as some seem to imagine, merely a refinement of the other. The difference is that of a discreet degree. The one centres and ends in the individual self; the other, overlooking self, expands and delights in the Universal, the Absolute, the Right, the True—that is in God. It

Takes every creature in, of every kind.

While self-love is the centrifugal force which throws man out, making him an individual world, divine love is the centripetal force which strives to round his course into an orbit of beauty and eternal harmony. The first is necessary to make him a man; but unless subordinated to the latter, he flies off in a tangent, and wanders in sunless, hopeless night.

Again, from the principle of self-love, when developed inordinately, it is well-known spring pride, envy, jealousy, hatred, revenge, tyranny, and all other hateful "works of the flesh." From divine or spiritual love, on the contrary, spring spontaneously humility, generosity, justice, beneficence, charity, and all sweet graces of the spirit.

If these distinctions be correct, the first mode or kind of progression cannot be properly called *spiritual*. It is but a continuous development of the human natural or selfish life-principle. And even could we be sure that this process can go on endlessly, it is doubtful whether in itself it would be desirable—albeit it is the kind of progression that most people seem to be dreaming of and looking for.

Such progression, of itself, is not certain to produce happiness. Who does not know that the most learned, talented, skilful, luxurious, and powerful, whether nations or individuals, are far from being always the most happy? In truth, is it not a law written in our constitutions, attested by almost universal ex-

perience, that living for merely selfish ends, whether refined or gross, leads sooner or later to disappointment and bitterness? It is, then, certain to produce unhappiness.

Nay, more: Does not progress in this direction point directly to decay and dissolution? Loss of power, both in nations and individuals, is proverbially the consequence of luxury and selfish indulgence. The more entire the surrender to the lower appetites, the more rapid the decay. Who can say that there is not a disintegration of the mental structure itself? Who can affirm that the merely human life-principle may not sooner or later reach the limit of its potency, and then, like other natural products, fall into desuetude and disorganization? And who can reveal what agonies may attend the slow process of this "second death?"

These are questions not to be too lightly dismissed. But even if the case be otherwise, what thoughtful mind can wish for endless progression in mere selfishness? What else could this be but to "dwell with everlasting burnings"—the burnings of insatiate desire? No "orthodox hell" need be more dreaded than a "heaven" of selfishness, if such a thing were possible.

What, then, is Spiritual Progression? Its first stage is being born or introduced from the natural into a higher degree or quality of conscious life, as distinct from the highest human as this is from vegetable life.

Its *rationale* may, perhaps, be briefly stated thus:—Man's human life-principle, being the apex and crowning product of Nature, (or of God through Nature,)—the highest point where she approaches Deity,—is capable of receiving within itself a germ of the Universal Spirit, which in its nature is an unselfish love. This germ, under suitable influences and proper conditions, may (analogously to all other germs) be quickened into activity, and may expand till it pervades and possesses the whole personality. This process may be more or less rapid, accordingly as it is favoured or otherwise by surrounding conditions. Receptivity, or humility and teachableness, are plainly among the requisite conditions. As the process advances, it causes an overcoming and successive putting off or clarifying of all human loves—a surrender of selfish will into the sweet acquiescence with the Universal Will—a calm, joyful trust in an all-controlling power and an all-directing wisdom. It does not require the death of the physical body, nor does it necessarily follow that event, as some imagine; but it does require a *voluntary* dying to, or withdrawal of the affections from, all earthly objects, in so far as they minister to the selfish life.

With some persons—those of a plastic, yielding temperament—this process of dying to the "natural," and being quickened in the "spiritual," may be comparatively easy and smooth,

unmarked by severe experiences. With others, who are more positive and self-willed, it is often attended, in its earlier stages at least, by struggles, agonies, and heart-rendings, indescribable. All who experience it must expect a sufficiency of severe discipline, to induce a letting go of all external ties and reliances, and a resting solely upon the internal and the everlasting. Those who understand the uses of such discipline will not go whining about under it to excite sympathy, nor boasting of it as evidence that they are special favourites of the Almighty, but will gratefully and modestly accept it as a token of parental guardianship, and seek to learn its lesson in full.

This kind of progress is surely no "inevitable" downhill slide. It is an upward struggle. Only earnest, energetic souls can experience it. If the listless and indolent are ever to realize it, it must be when they, through purgatorial fires, have been rendered earnest and energetic. It may be expected in due time to deliver its subjects from all bondage to earthly passions,—from all pride, envy, jealousy, and other unlovely traits,—and introduce them into a new world of perpetual youth, of unselfish love, of ever-increasing delights.

This is SPIRITUAL PROGRESSION. It embraces and presents in a rational form the grand truth underlying the church dogma of "regeneration" or "new birth." It is an ascension from the natural to the spiritual plane of conscious life.

Its result is, in fact, identical with the "resurrection" state, of which the New Testament speaks so frequently, though often vaguely; and of which the mere raising of the spirit-body to a future life is but a symbol. What we have called the human or natural selfhood is what Paul termed "the first man Adam;" and what we have called the spiritual or divine selfhood he terms "the last Adam," and "the Lord from heaven." "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a *living soul*. The last Adam is a *quickening* [*i. e.*, life-giving] *spirit*. . . . The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven," *i. e.*, the Universal Spirit, descending by influx, and becoming incarnate in human forms.

Thus our subject rationally solves another problem of the theologians,—even the great "Mystery of the Incarnation,"—making it a thing to be practically realized, reader, by you and by me. "Whoso readeth, let him understand." Is not the attainment of such progression worthy of all possible effort on our part?



NANGLE, OF SKREEN.*

WITH AN ENQUIRY WHEN CHRISTIANITY IS TO BEGIN.

By WILLIAM HOWITT.

You may, if you please, say that the Bible is not true,—or you may say that its ethics are not practicable; but if you say that the religion of modern Europe is CHRISTIANITY, you must excuse me laughing in your face. Come, let us lay aside our disguises. Christianity, we know is sublime, but the sublime is not easy. The world is *very* easy, and clever at a compromise. So she has entered into a pleasant convention with us,—to pronounce a staring copper Brummagem Christianity, the TRUE CHRISTIAN SOVEREIGN; and it is amazing with what acceptance it passes with a clever people like us who would blush to be out of the fashion!—*From a description of "The admired Image of Christ, pronounced by the best judges superior to the original antique, being from the modern Brass Foundry of Cosmos, Sarx, Diabolos, and Co."*

NANGLE, of Skreen—what does he mean,
That the devil's converted, or turned very green?
The pamphlet he sends us is not vastly new,—
It only takes up the old cry of the Jew,
Who said when our Saviour was healing the sick—
"Oh! that is the work of that crafty Old Nick!"
When our Lord in his mercy his miracles wrought,
That man through belief might be savingly taught;
When he called up the dead, and gave light to the blind,
And speech to the dumb, and sane thought to the mind;
And Divinity shone in each heavenly action,
They declared it at once a satanical paction.
And that is the way that the parsons still view it,—
If the world's to be saved—it's the devil must do it;
If miracles come and upset learned rules,
And Atheists and Infidels own themselves fools,
If new life appears in the old Christian root,
And the tree of religion is known by its fruit;
If doubts of the future are driven to their den,
And men see that spirits are but bodiless men;
If they hear from a world so long hidden from view
That the gospel is substance, eternal, and true;
And that heaven lies about us, and those gone before,
Are coming to tell us to tremble no more;
For the God of that nature around us outspread,
Is the God of the living and not of the dead:
In short, if there be a salvation—how odd—
They *will* give it to Satan, and not unto God!

* The Rev. Mr. Nangle, Rector of Skreen, in Ireland, is the author of a little essay, ascribing Spiritualism to the Devil.

And, what! if it should then turn out to be true
 That the Devil himself is reformed, and made new?
 If the saw should be verified e'en of his burning,
 That the longest of lanes must yet have a turning?
 If down in that region of scorching highways,
 Where houses and passions are all in a blaze;
 If the Devil himself should aspire to repair—
 What wonder—to earth, for a breath of fresh air?
 And seeing how sadly the clergy are floored?
 How virtue, and faith, and pure life are ignored?
 How the church which is set up and linked to the State
 To make men good Christians, and keep them all straight,—
 Has riches and titles, and archbishops grand,
 But has let the old unction slip out of its hand;—
 That all Europe, called Christian, is humming and drumming;
 Inventing new engines of death for foes coming;
 That "Peace upon earth, and goodwill to mankind,"
 Amidst powder and rifles are deafened and blind:
 That the church which should save us, is cracked and dyspeptic,—
 With one side all Popish, the other all sceptic;*
 That forgetting its watchword—the Princedom of Peace—
 It has given to the War-god a bloody new lease;
 That it teaches our striplings in school and in college
 That the doctrine of Pagans is still the true knowledge;
 That through seventeen long years—the soft season of youth,
 They steep us in Pagan ideas as the truth;
 That with Homer, and Virgil, and Ovid, and Flaccus,
 They cram us, and jam us, and stuff us, and pack us;
 With the wrath of Achilles, the rage of Tydides,
 The adulteries of Jove, and the like of Alcides,
 With Anacreon and Pindar so brimmed to the chin,
 That for Christ or a spark of his faith to get in,
 Of all the great miracles ever yet done
 Would be the most wonderful under the sun!

If the devil, I say, should come up and behold
 What a sort of queer beasts have crept into Christ's fold,—
 How his vineyard lies trodden, of wild-boars the lair,
 And man in his darkness sits clad in despair—
 If he *does* come and work—in this wonderful fashion—
 What can be the reason but Satan's compassion?
 For the world at this moment, in country and city,
 Is wretched enough to make devils feel pity;
 For the wise and the foolish alike have combined,
 To teach that all life is to matter confined.

* Vide *Oxford Tracts and Essays and Reviews*.—*Laud and Strauss wrestling for supremacy in the Establishment*.

With impurity stalking through every street,
Where avarice, and luxury, and blasphemy meet;
And that which of old had a name of pollution,
Is now become "social," a great institution!
If the devil himself, seeing this, has grown sad,—
And is doing great signs, and redeeming the bad,—
And renewing our faith in the holy and true,
Which churches and priests were not able to do—
To flash a new light on death's chaos so dim—
What a scandal to them!—what a credit to him!

But soft! can the devil forsake his old craft?
Is it he that will give us o'er Lethe a raft?
Not so! Come there life, revelation, and power—
We know from what hand is the glorious dower:
The devil may work, and the learned may plod,
But truth and salvation are only from God!

Now, I trust that the readers of the *Spiritual Magazine* will not imagine that the sentiments expressed in these free and easy verses are nothing more than fun and satire. They are, believe me, great and solemn truths. We are continually wondering at the difficulty which we have in persuading people to accept the facts of Spiritualism; but it would be still more wonderful if they did. Nearly two thousand years have elapsed since the advent of Christ, and we have not yet been able to accept and to incorporate in our intellectual constitutions, Christianity. I say this seriously and advisedly; and if any one will take his New Testament in his hand, and examine what is the standard of Christianity as there laid down by its divine Founder, and then just look round him on this present world of ours, he will soon see that we are just where the moralists, the poets and dramatists of Greece and Rome, placed their world in the scale of ethics. And why so? Simply because we educate our children still in the Paganism of Aristophanes and Juvenal. We do it, and always have done it, diligently, uniformly and thoroughly. We beat Paganism into our children, and expect them to turn out Christians. We used to put young sweeps up chimneys, and might as well have expected them to wave their brush from the chimney-pot with clean faces and ungrimed shirts. We have done with that; but we always did and do put our young men through the sinks and stews of Paganism, and expect them to emerge saints.

Why, these very Pagan writers themselves warn you in a thousand places of the inevitable consequences of the first teachings of youth. Habit, we say, is *second* nature; but the old Pagans seemed to think that it became the first, foremost, and only nature. We could quote a volume from Plato,

Menander, and his imitator, Terence, from Seneca, Lucian, Horace, and the rest of them, to prove that what you sow in your children you are sure to reap.

—Dociles imitandis

Turpibus et pravis omnes sumus.—JUVENAL.

But if you want to know what the ancients thought of education, read the whole fourteenth Satire of Juvenal.

—Cum septimus annus

Transierit puero, nondum omni dente renato,
Barbatus licet admoveas mille inde magistros,
Hinc totidem—

That is, when your boy has passed his seventh year, and has not yet renewed his teeth, you may give him a thousand bearded masters, if you will, but it will be all the same. But if this be the case at the end of seven years, what must it be at the end of seventeen? How is it then, that the Society for the Suppression of Vice has not turned its attention to the works used in all our national and other seminaries, as the text books in Greek and Latin? They explore Holywell-street diligently, and bring forward books and pictures destructive of public morals for condemnation, yet they never turn a single glance on Westminster, or Harrow, or Eton, or Rugby, or a thousand other schools, where the children of the higher and middle classes are daily and regularly indoctrinated with Paganism, and this in its most obscene and unchristian forms. Lactantius, in his day, declared that it had been impossible to the heathen, however educated or civilized, to comprehend true virtue, much less to be virtuous, because their gods were set before them as examples of every species of violence, injustice, lasciviousness, adultery, and crimes unnameable. He especially mentioned the books of Homer and Virgil as abounding with all these indecencies and monstrosities; as fraught, from beginning to end, with the spirit of war, of aggression, of physical violence, of sensuality, and a turgid and intolerable pride. Yet what are the books now employed in all our schools in the teaching of the two languages which are deemed absolutely essential to every man of education? Precisely these very same books. Homer, Virgil, Terence, Ovid, Horace, and the like, are the books which are expected to be daily in the hands of all our boys who are to become our senators and rulers, our preachers and teachers; to form and lead the public sentiment, to originate the acts and the history of the nation. Is it any wonder, then, that Christianity remains only a name amongst us? That in all our great opinions and practices we are as essentially Pagans as were Homer and Thucydides themselves? That pretending to be the disciples of the Prince of Peace, we are unblushingly the disciples, and very zealous ones, of Mars and Bellona?

We open Homer's Iliad, the book presented for the study and supreme admiration of our youth, and the first words that meet us are—

Μηνιν, ἄειδε, θεά, Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
Οὐλομένην—etc.

In fact, the gloomy wrath of Achilles, the great hero of the book, which sent thousands of the brave Greeks to Hades, and occasioned unnumbered sorrows to his countrymen. The first view of this hero is in this fierce quarrel with Agamemnon; the next is his fury for the loss of his kept mistress. Then quickly follow scenes betwixt Jove and Juno, and Paris and Helen, of the most luscious kind. We open Virgil, and it is again, "Arma virumque cano"—followed by similar scenes with Æneas and Dido. Pretty readings for growing boys! And it is not merely the reading, it is the daily and yearly study of the whole of these volumes, freighted with violence and sensuality. Where Christ says "Love your enemies, and do good to those that hate you, and despitefully use you," we say to our youth in Homer—

“ὦ κύνες, οὐ μ' ἔτ' ἐφάσκεθ' ὑπότροπον οἴκαδ' ἰκέσθαι
Δῆμον ἄπο Τρώων,”—

Dogs! you have had your day! ye feared no more
Me in the beggar from the Trojan shore.

We pronounce with Ulysses most earnestly—

The hour of vengeance, wretches! now is come,
Impending fate is yours, and instant doom!

Whilst we are told that, under the influence of real Christianity, we shall beat our spears into ploughshares, and our swords into pruning-hooks, we are, as a nation, armed to the very teeth; spending thirty or forty millions a-year in warriors and war-ships; and growing so excessively Homeric that our very lawyers and doctors, and clerks and shopkeepers are rushing from their stools and desks, their pill-boxes and counters, to strut as volunteers, and to say to our French neighbours, "Come on, we are ready for you?"

What a very Christian nation! What a wonderful progress in the principles of the religion of peace in only eighteen hundred years! But can it be otherwise, when every day our boys grow up in admiration of Mars and Hector, and Achilles, and Ajax Telamon? When they gloat open-mouthed, over Achilles boasting—

I sacked twelve ample cities on the main,
And twelve lay smoking on the Trojan plain.

Or see with wonder—

How raged Tydides, boundless in his ire.

Fed for days and years on this sort of food, can these lads long

for anything so much as to sack their twelve ample cities in India, or somewhere else, and then, like him, vaunt—

The wealth I gathered, and the spoils I made ?

How is it possible that the meek and humane sentiments of the Gospel can ever enter souls thus nurtured, thus built up? That they can ever regard its precepts as anything but to be heard in churches, and left there in the great church Bible, as their only proper place?

How is it to be expected,—what fools we must be to expect anything but what we see from a nation's whole youth familiarized every day for above ten years together,—those growing, susceptible years,—those years when their feelings are developing, their passions are kindling into volcanic strength—with all the roving rapes and peccadilloes of gods and goddesses, whom they have learned to admire above all things, by the preference given them by the most approved of all systems of education? When the luscious things of Catullus, and Anacreon, and the tenfold indecencies of Ovid, are put into their hands as their daily and nightly study?

We educate the nations as Pagans of the highest type and deepest tone, and we expect them to become Christians. What logic! We roll our children in a Styx of heathen grossness and satyr bestiality, and we expect them to become, as a matter of course,—pure as lilies, and gentle as lambs. And yet, is not everybody complaining of the sad tone of our public schools? I heard a very learned man say lately, "When my boys come from Eton, I try to instil a little Christianity into them. But bless me! it seems of but little use." Nevertheless, so completely has custom blinded us in this respect, that the most Christian of our teachers, the most pious and sagacious of our preachers and prelates never discern the enormity; never suspect the rottenness of the system that they perpetuate. They put filth into all the food of youth, and think that, like manure and sewerage at a tree root, it will percolate into piety, and produce the most salutary fruits. "O fools and blind!" How is it that such men as Arnold and other school reformers never get a glimpse of this great Serbonian bog of moral pestilence and death?

Yet Plato saw it, and denounced the desolating impurity of Homer and the other poets; so that he excluded the poets altogether from his model republic. Yet the early fathers saw it. Lactantius saw it; and Augustine saw it. Let us look a little at the "Confessions" of the latter. "Over the entrance of the Grammar School is a veil drawn! True; yet this is not so much an emblem of aught recondite as a cloke of error. Let not those whom I no longer fear cry out against me. . . . Let not

either buyers or sellers of grammar cry out against me. . . But woe is thee, thou torrent of human custom ! Who shall stand against thee ? How long shalt thou remain undried up ? How long roll the sons of Eve into that huge and hideous ocean, which even they scarcely over-pass who climb the cross ? Did I not read in thee of Jove the thunderer and the adulterer ? Both, doubtless, he could not be, but so the feigned thunder might continue, and pander to real adultery. And now, which of our gowned masters lends a sober ear to one who from their own school cries out—‘ These were Homer’s pictures, transferring things human to the gods : would he had brought down things divine to us ! ’ Yet more truly had he said,—‘ These are, indeed, his pictures, but attributing a divine nature to wicked men, that crimes might be no longer crimes, and that whoso commits them might seem to imitate not abandoned men, but the celestial gods. . . ’ “ And yet, thou hellish torrent, into thee are cast the sons of men, with rich rewards for compassing such learning ; and a great solemnity is made of it, when this is going on in the forum, within sight of law, appointing a salary besides the scholar’s payments ; and thou lashest thy rocks and roarest—Hence words are learnt ; hence eloquence ; most necessary to gain your ends, or maintain opinions.” As if we should never know such words as “ golden shower,” “ lap,” “ beguile,” “ temples of the heavens,” or others in that passage, unless Terence had brought a lewd youth upon the stage, setting up Jupiter as his example of seduction :—

Viewing a picture where the tale was drawn,
Of Jove descending in a golden shower,
To Danæ’s lap, a woman to beguile.

And then mark how he excites himself to lust, as by celestial authority :—

And what god ? Great Jove,
Who shakes heaven’s highest temples with his thunder.
And I poor mortal man, not do the same ?
I did it, and with all my heart I did it.

“ Not one whit more easily are the words learnt for all this vileness, but by their means the vileness is committed with less shame. Not that I blame the words, being, as it were, choice and precious vessels, but that wine of error which is drunk to us in them by intoxicated teachers : and if we too drink not we are beaten, and have no sober judge to whom we may appeal. But, O my God, in whose presence I may now without hurt remember this, all this, unhappily, I learnt willingly, with great delight, and for this was pronounced a hopeful boy.

“ Bear with me, my God, while I say something of my wit, Thy gift, and on what dotages I was compelled to waste it. But we were forced to go astray in the footsteps of the poetic fictions. What is it to me, O my true life, my God, that my declamation

was applauded above so many of my own age and class? Is not all this wind and smoke? And was there nothing else whereon to exercise my wit and tongue?"—B. L.

Is there nothing else, indeed, after more than a thousand years on which to exercise the wits and tongues of our children? After all the praises of the classic writers of antiquity, are there not to be found sufficient prose and verse among them worthy of a Christian mind to imbibe and a Christian memory to retain, without the polluted pages of a Homer, or a Virgil, or of some of their compatriots, who, with all their genius, are sources of a moral poison thus sucked in by unsuspecting youth under the highest sanctions of the learning, the talent, the station, and the custom of this country? Are the souls of men, looking back on this early feeding under the upas trees of classic Greece and Rome, still to repeat the lamentations of Augustine? Still to deplore the desolations that these Pagan poisons have perpetrated on their lives? Are men with the gospel of peace and holiness, of a divine purity, of a God-like forgiveness, of an arch-angelic nobility in their hands, daily read or readable in their houses, weekly read in their churches, still to have their moral perceptions, its world-restoring truths forestalled, prevented, made impossible by this Pagan virus, diffused through every vein and artery of their bodies, through every sense and sentiment of their souls; and thus to go on re-enacting old Paganism in wars and aggressions on their neighbours for ever? Are they to scatter pollution through our cities, till men's minds stand aghast at the torrent of licentiousness that sweeps through our streets, sweeping down women's peace and virtue to destruction, the souls of our youth to perdition?

Are Homer and Virgil, and Catullus, and Ovid still to envenom our passions with death; still to dictate our life's maxims; still to model our opinions, and give to our sentiments a lethal dye, as if there were no gospel, and no vitalizing Christ? These are questions which it is high time for all men to ask themselves. It is not the question whether we shall learn Greek and Latin, but from what source? It is not the question whether we shall read Homer and Virgil, but when? In mature life, and with hearts and minds filled and fortified by the divine spirit and doctrine of Christianity, we may read and enjoy the nobler parts of these authors, rejecting, by a perfected taste, their offal, as we feed on beef, and cast away the garbage that once accompanied it. But for God's sake, for humanity's, that savage war may cease to disgrace a *soi-disant* Christian world, that sensuality may be checked and snubbed, and whipped down into its own nether regions, let not the tender minds of our children be fed on poisons pregnant with death and misery, and anti-civilization to

every generation which is past, and to every generation which shall still use them.

Cast a glance on our Europe of 1861. Behold its enormous armies, its despots, its war spirit, its peoples groaning under the weight of a martial taxation, its every nation living in distrust of its neighbour. Look at the enormous mass of litigation in this country, and remember the words of St. Paul, who thought it monstrous that Christians should "go to law one with another." Is that a mark of our religion? Behold the vices of cities, and the ignorance of the poor, and ask yourselves whether this could have possibly been the Europe of to-day, if a fair and manly Christianity had been taught with half the zeal and honour with which we have taught the fierce dogmas, the resentful pride, the loveless ethics, and the sensual prurience of Paganism. Augustine tells us twelve hundred years ago, that this could not have been the case in his day, "had the tender shoots of the heart been supported by the prop of the Scriptures. So it had not trailed away amid these empty trifles, a defiled prey to the fowls of the air. For in more ways than one do we sacrifice to the rebellious angels." Augustine remarks how much more men are shocked at a barbarism of speech than of action. That they had rather hate a *human* being than omit the aspirate in a *uman* being. That if they were pleading before a judge in public, they would feel more shame in murdering the words *human* being, than in having murdered the human being himself. And this, he adds, "Was the world at whose gate unhappily I lay in my boyhood; this the stage where I feared more to commit a barbarism, than having committed one, to envy those who had not. These things I speak and confess to Thee, my God, for which I had praise from them whom then I thought it all virtue to please."

These were professedly Pagan teachers, but would not Augustine be rather astonished, if he returned to earth, after more than twelve centuries, to find a professedly Christian world still laying their children at this same gate of Pagan debauchery? But this would not be his sole astonishment. He would have more in beholding the terrible and discouraging fruits which it has scattered over the world. Fruits more prolific of armed men than the dragons' teeth of a thousand Cadmuses or Jasons.

And has not every one beheld the avidity with which such works as Tom Brown with his fisty-cuffs, and Kingsley's novels and their "Muscular Christianity," have been read? How the war-spirit has been inflamed by them, and they again by the war-spirit? How the whole country is mad with Tom Brownism and Muscular Christianity in parliamentary votes for "The Services," and in Volunteerism? Muscular Christianity! Mus-

cular nonsense! Paganism with a sham-Christian whitewash! The genius and eloquence of these writers, and the usual justice of their sentiments have enabled them the more vigorously to stimulate this belligerent mania.

The corruption of the age—a Christian age too, forsooth!—has just had a charming revelation in our Divorce Court, and in the “Pretty Horsebreaker” correspondence in the *Times*, which journal by no means went to the bottom of that gangrene, for the *Times* dare not probe thoroughly such a fester on the very forehead of society. There is a step onwards beyond the young single men and their “pretty horsebreakers,” in amongst the married men in high places and the same Aspasias. In fact, nearly two thousand years after Christ, we have not yet adopted Christianity, but teach and practise Paganism as diligently and as successfully as ever. Is, it not then, premature by a thousand years to expect people to embrace Spiritualism?

And yet, let no one mistake me, and say that I stamp us all as Pagans. Not so. Though I say, and that by the clearest marks and proofs of gospel test, that for any nation yet to call itself a Christian nation, is a gross and impudent assumption, yet it is equally certain that God has a large and a true church in each. In none, perhaps, so great as in England. That is a church still in the wilderness, but it is a true and a great church. It has grown in spite of the deep and systematic foundation of Paganism laid in education. It has grown by the labours of great and independent souls of all sects and establishments, and of no sects and establishments—by such as have broken through the bondage of scholastic teachings and creeds, by such as never knew them. By pure, diligent, unambitious men, in thousands who have borne the badge of hierarchy or anti-hierarchy on their backs, but the lamp of God’s love and light in their hearts, and have gone on their way forgetting outward names and institutions in the ever-absorbing and overflowing spirit of a divine benevolence towards their fellow men. Such men we see penetrating daily into the darkest, foulest, most man-forsaken, but not God-forsaken purlieus of our great cities; undaunted by contempt, uncheered by applause, unslackened in their zeal by the prospects of an almost boundless wickedness. God’s heroes! true, staunch heroes! who shall never receive estates and seats amongst our peers for their services, but the far more glorious heritage of those who “shine as stars in the firmament for ever and ever.” This church has grown by the self-devotion and self-sacrifice of Catholic and Anglo-Catholic, of assenter and dissenter, of learned and unlearned, and it is the great cheering fact of the age that it is visibly and widely growing. In all ranks, and in all places, we cannot come into contact with our fellows without discovering a

deep and earnest spirit of enquiry after a more pure and inward life. The great cry is—

More life and fuller 'tis we want.

While the tempest of Paganism sweeps on amid guns and drums, and the brazen music of strife and bloodshed; while Babylon, the harlot, still claims her tawdry and voluptuous votaries in this wealthy and corrupt age, there is yet "a still small voice" of the tender and the divine whispering amongst loving hearts and earnest, tearfully aspiring souls; and as this breath of the upper heavens, of the inner sanctuary of the Saviour's peace, touches more and more of the seeking ones as it passes, the numbers and the boundaries of the living undivided church must still expand. And it is to aid this expansion, to favour this genuine life, that it is necessary that the old philosophy of Paganism should be put into its proper place, and the opening of life be cleared from the poison plants of Pagan passions and ideas, and be inaugurated only amid the dews and scented herbage, the flowers and free airs of unfettered, unprevented, unperverted CHRISTIANITY.

REICHENBACH'S RECENT VIEWS ON SPIRITUALISM.

TO BARON LANGSDORFF—DEAR SIR,—Thanking you for the confidence you manifest in me, I do not delay to reply to your letter.

Publications about Spiritualism are very rare in Germany; besides those of Hornung in Berlin I cannot mention any of importance of recent date. The best of Hornung's publications is "Heinrich (Henry) Heine," the immortal Poet. (Stuttgart, 1857).

I am personally acquainted with Hornung; he has visited me, and six months ago I visited him in Berlin. He is certainly a very honest man. I deem his writings worthy of some attention, but the scientific world in Germany did not take notice of them.

The doctrine of Spiritualism in the *American* sense of the word is only ridiculed in Germany and treated with contempt. The pretended nonsense is considered unworthy of an investigation. Even the tipping of the table, this palpable phenomena of the greatest mystery and importance, has not found one man who has taken pains to investigate it methodically. Here in Germany all (people) subordinate under authorities, and if a short-head as "Liebig" gives a foolish verdict, it is a *Gospel* for the crowd, and all affirm his judgment: "O yes, yes, Mr. Judge, yes."

You will have traced out that there is a vast space between my writings and Spiritualism, and that my method to manage this subject is, to adhere *strictly* to exact Natural Science in connection with the laws of logical development, so *strictly* as no Naturalist, no Physician, no Philosopher ever did before in this difficult and most important matter.

The public has swallowed my letters on "Odic Force" in hot haste, but science did not move a finger. My chief work, "The Sensitive Man," (human being) passes silently down the Orkus. Nobody dared to attack its contents, and those who assaulted its outsides are battered down by my arguments.

So it is in Germany. The gentlemen feel that my assertions rest on a foundation not to be overthrown, and they know that as long as I live they are untouchable. But after my death, cowardice will attempt to throw dirt on my works when I cannot struggle against their folly.

In France, Spiritualism has not made much progress since some shallow scholars have advocated it and the scientific kept distant. Only in England exists some sobriety, but no distinguished heads keep it aloft and separate the counterfeit from the genuine. Likely half a century has to pass away before a brighter day will dawn in Europe for a calm, impartial, and judicious investigation.

I approve fully of your course to receive a medium in your house. This will give you the opportunity to penetrate into the peculiarities of this theory.

When you will read my book, "The Sensitive Man," you will find a number of facts bearing upon this subject, scientifically arranged. "The World of Plants," (or, Vegetable Kingdom,) in its relation to sensitiveness, is also one of my publications, and, I think, an intelligible book. But you ask for special guides to Spiritualism. All my publications serve only to build its foundation and not the superstructure, and until a good foundation is laid never can we erect a durable structure.

The Americans build a pyramid by beginning at the top, and therefore their efforts will hardly have sufficient firmness. First we must know the natural powers which are acting here, and then we can look farther: how they develop their activity in higher regions, in spiritual spheres. Any other road, as, for instance, that travelled by "Mesmer," leads to confusion and mistakes.

Respectfully yours,

Castle of Reisenberg, March 1, 1861.

REICHENBACH.

SPIRITUAL PROCESSIONS AT BOULOGNE.

A CORRESPONDENT, who has been many years resident at Boulogne, informs us of some curious occurrences there of a spiritual nature, not altogether unlike the ghostly funeral processions sometimes seen in Wales. These, however, have been noticed, and are testified by several persons, and amongst them by some, little likely to be carried away by small delusions of the senses. We think them therefore to be sufficiently proved to find a place here, and we shall be glad to have any further particulars concerning them.

Our correspondent, writing in June last, says:—

"Ghostly processions are the fashion in Boulogne at present. I heard one from my bed the other night. The funeral service was being intoned in the streets at a quarter past 2 a.m., but no steps were audible, only the procession stopped at our door, and was there joined by another priest, who issued out. That same week the night patrol going their rounds, saw a religious procession headed by a curé, whom they recognized as having died some years ago, M. Sergent. They knocked up the curé of St. Pierre on the Heights, begging him to come and put a stop to it; but the curé called them imbeciles, and shut up his window. It was about 2 o'clock in the morning, some nights after (it is now three weeks since), they again saw the spirits in procession; this time two curés, M. Sergent and another, who stopped before St. Pierre, and M. Sergent knelt on the church steps, the procession singing the mass. When the *gardes de nuit* tried to approach, stones were hurled at them by the spirits! Again they ran to the curé, and asked if he did not hear singing—that M. Sergent *faisoit le tour de l'église*; so the curé said "*C'est bien; nous prions pour lui.*" and they have had masses said *et on n'entend plus rien*. The wife of one of the *gardes de nuit* is so frightened *elle n'ose pas se coucher* till her husband comes home, and the sacristain opposite St. Pierre *ne dort plus*, for fear of what may next happen."

Notices of Books.

The Heavenly Marriage. A Discourse by a LAYMAN. Whitfield, Strand.

THIS is a pamphlet of only a dozen pages; but its value is in inverse ratio to its bulk. By "the Heavenly Marriage," the author intends the indissoluble union of God and Humanity; that blissful union and communion of the soul with God, which can alone satisfy its infinite yearnings. This is its divine destiny; the consummate excellence and flower of its immortal nature. Both in materials and spirituals our knowledge advances, from the simple to the complex, from outmost to inmost, from circumferences to centres. "At first, men in their investigations of external nature were content to imagine and speculate, making their crude conceptions the measure of God's boundless wisdom. At this time we hear of four elements and a fixed earth surrounded by a solid firmament. By degrees, thoughtful and wise men laid the foundations of science in the study of forms and magnitudes, and mathematics, the simplest and the earliest of the sciences, arose. From this they proceeded to the study of forces, or to dynamics; and then a science of astronomy became possible. The relations of minute particles of matter then attracted attention, and the wonders of chemistry came to view. Organic life was next examined, and physiology, founded on anatomy and chemistry, is slowly developing the wonders of life to the mind; the crowning science of psychology, or the study of mind, and social science, or that of the relations of men to one another, are becoming the objects of study, and complete what may be called the hierarchy of the sciences." Thus, "we have been ascending the steps of God's temple, though only in the outer court. Our progress, however, tends from without inwards; the sciences are conveying to God. The feelings of the heart and the inductions and deductions of science will ultimately be as one, religion and science be united, and God be all in all."

The course of worship has been analogous to that of science. "At first, worship was purely external; an external God, approached by symbol and ceremony, which often usurped the place of what they meant, and degraded instead of elevating the mind. Protestantism simplified matters, but did not essentially alter for the mass the external character of worship; and the Bible, as the object of intellectual speculation and an infallible authority, kept men away from him of whom it testifies." The author believes that it is in the exercise of those divine affections which God has implanted within the soul, that man must seek after God, if haply he would find Him who is not far from every one of us. But, "if we would come to God, we must first come to ourselves. In order to do this, we must give up, as competitors for our supreme love, all external objects and beings." Self-sacrifice is the distinctive principle of Christ, proclaimed alike by his teaching and example. As we die to self we live to God, and are truly reconciled to Him. This day of reconciliation for humanity the author believes is fast approaching. "The greatest minds of the race have never lost sight of the great central truth of God, but have trustingly held on to Him, as children with imperfect senses learning to walk hold on to the hand of an earthly parent. With clearer views and firmer hold the seers and prophets of the race, their inner senses open, have communed with God, and have cheered their toil-worn brethren of science with precious utterances. These come to us across the centuries with unabated interest, and will continue to be fresh long after the theologies grafted upon them by the opinions of the time have gone to merited oblivion. Nor do we depend on these alone; sad were it if the human heart at the present day were left to depend on the experiences of the past. The true heart in all ages, now as ever, will ever, by looking within, find evidences of its God. Inspired utterances have not ceased among us; humanity is not worn out. Multitudes at the present day believe in a spiritual world very near; and testimony to this is growing apace." "And the friends of the race and the powers for good are increasing with every good man who goes to the Father. The whole Church of Jesus; Apostles,

Martyrs, Prophets, Teachers, all benefactors of their kind, have gone to prepare a place for us, and to act on the minds of succeeding generations by their sympathy, their succour, their heavenly consolation. They have become ministering spirits sent forth to minister to suffering humanity, the heir of universal salvation." We must conclude our notice with one further extract, which urges a consideration of the highest practical moment. "Ah! nothing cripples thought so much as wrong feeling. The narrow heart is parent of the narrow creed; and when we are not right at heart we are always fearing to be wrong in everything. Love enlarges the heart, and purifies the conscience, and frees the intellect, and sanctifies the man. No narrow views of salvation then; no unworthy views of God." We would not, any more than the author, apply these reflections to any one church or body of men in particular. We may all ponder on and profit by them. A true spiritual catholicity is one of the great wants of the age.

M. Fiquier's Histoire du Merveilleux dans les Temps Modernes.

It is not a little strange that among the opponents of Spiritualism the misconception should still prevail that ultramundane phenomena are regarded by believers in their occurrence as violations of the laws of nature. This misconception pervades the argument of M. Fiquier, who appears to think that by pointing out that the essential sameness between the various phases of the marvellous is an indication of law, he has dealt a blow to Spiritualism; the truth being that on nothing have Spiritualists more strongly insisted than that these ultramundane manifestations take place in accordance with law and are part of the divine order; and they have adduced this very identity of principle amidst multiform variety, as affording to this view the firmest support.

The first page of M. Fiquier's preface reads, in fact, precisely as though from the pen of a defender of the faith, but when he has gone through a portion of his narrative, and when from statement he comes to deduction, he asks "Is it not demonstrated that in consequence of the natural inclination of man towards the marvellous, the same extravagancies, the same hallucinations may break out after intervals of ages, and that on this dangerous ground the human mind seems to revolve in a fatal circle?"

It is asked in return whether it is more likely that a tendency, admitted by M. Fiquier to be innate and powerful in the human mind, implanted, therefore, by the Creator, should be one leading only to hallucination; or, that this tendency should point to occult realities glimmering through yet unexplored portions of nature's realm? The extravagancies M. Fiquier depicts, are the result not of belief in spiritual phenomena, but of ignorance of their nature and laws. The scientific would do well to remember the words of Bacon, when he tells us that "We may well hope that many excellent and useful matters are yet treasured up in the bosom of nature, bearing no relation or analogy to our actual discoveries, but out of the common track of our imagination, and still undiscovered, which will doubtless be brought to light in the course and lapse of years."* Unfortunately the tendency of men of science has on the contrary ever been to turn away from, or to oppose new truths "bearing no relation or analogy to our actual discoveries." It is to be lamented that they should thus diminish the large debt of gratitude due to them by mankind.

M. Fiquier himself amusingly relates the eagerness with which in the early part of last year the faculty in Paris took up hypnotism, considered then merely as an anæsthetic process: likening their revulsion of feeling with respect to it, when its mesmeric character developed itself before their eyes, to that of the man in the fable, who threw from him with horror the reviving serpent, which he had picked up, taking it for a stick as it lay benumbed with cold.

M. Fiquier's opinion, however, is that stick or serpent hypnotism must henceforth be subjected to serious examination, and that by it we are now

* *Novum Organum*, p. 87.

afforded an explanation of all phenomena hitherto regarded as spiritual or supernatural. It is difficult to see how that, which is itself so wrapped in mystery, can be said now to explain other mysteries; there is, however, reason to expect that the study of the mesmeric or odylic force will, by degrees, lead to the discovery of the laws of ultramundane phenomena. The *Histoire du Merveilleux* is an agreeably written book, though containing nothing either new or newly brought to light, and though very erroneous in statement as to that phase of the marvellous termed by M. Fiquier "spirits' rappings." It comprises much worthy of perusal by those requiring information as to the mere facts of its subject-matter; but in the eyes of persons who have seriously investigated the marvellous, no failure could well be more complete than the attempt made by M. Fiquier towards its elucidation. The prejudice that can lead a writer of his standing so to trample on human testimony, to put forth reasoning so loose and founded on a purely arbitrary selection of facts, is, in some degree, explicable only by reference to the great and fundamental misconception already mentioned. M. Fiquier and other men of science conceive that the spiritual phenomena would be subversive of the laws of nature: penetrated, therefore, as they are through their labours and experience with the conviction of the immutability of those laws, and fixing their eyes on the magnificent and beneficial results of their application to the affairs of life, they are unable to give their attention to the alleged phenomena so as to apprehend them correctly. On discovering their error, we hope they will be consoled for any check thus given to their pride by finding that their species is less prone to hallucination and imposture than they had believed it to be.

The Wedding Guests ; or, the Happiness of Life. A Novel, by
MARY C. HUME. Pitman, Paternoster Row.

It is not as a novel, though as such it ranks high above the average, but for the elevated tone and spiritual philosophy by which it is pervaded that we notice this work. The writer is the daughter of the late Joseph Hume, M.P., and is a receiver (but in no narrow sense) of the teachings of Swedenborg. It must not be imagined, however, that it is made the vehicle of doctrinal discussion, or that it is written in any polemical spirit: on the contrary, it is an agreeable well-written story. The reader may be both entertained in the reading of it and the wiser for having read it. The last chapter, entitled "Home," is one which we think will be particularly interesting to our readers, though it is, we regret, too long for extract into our pages. It is to be hoped that the reduced price at which this edition is offered will secure for it a greatly extended circle of readers.

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

DEAR SIR,—I have attended many circles in London, and find that we do not get here, generally, such incontestible proofs of spiritual agency as are common in America. I think this proceeds mainly from the magnetic conditions and circumstances of mediums and circles not being well studied and respected.

I have been several times present at a circle where Madame Louise Besson has been one of the mediums, but through the want above noticed, I have sometimes shared in the perplexity of others as to how much of the phenomena exhibited through her are due to "unconscious cerebration," how much to "suggestion," and how much to direct actuation of spirits. She seems to me a medium whose power for physical manifestations is equalled by impressibility for psychical ones. Her capabilities as a medium are only known in circles formed harmoniously; but even the best of these are held irregularly.

That spiritual and vital magnetism is in operation in these circles is evident. On one occasion, while waiting for the circle to assemble, the hand of Madame Besson and of another medium in another part of the room, were simultaneously thrown into involuntary and uncontrollable action, and drawn to each other; the hand of each being uneasy and tremulous until locked together, when Madame exclaimed "It is your sister," and then gave the sister's name. When the influence went off, her hands were agitated again, but in a different manner, and extended to a gentleman and his wife present, with the words "I feel it is your son Robert." I have seen Miss Caroline D——, and other mediums, affected in this magnetic way, accompanied by mental spiritual impressions, but more particularly so in America. Madame B. is frequently moved, in the waking state, in a manner characteristic of persons who have entered the spiritual life, and who are thus recognized, as much as by the sentiments they utter through her. I wish I could say "the words;" but these are in indifferent English. It seems that the spirit impresses ideas, and the medium expresses them in her own words.

According to my observations, the vito-magnetic susceptibility of mediums varies. I have seen few so susceptible as the medium I speak of. If a stranger enters the room after she has passed into the magnetic state, her whole organism is often disturbed: she becomes silent, trembles, shrinks, and cannot well proceed until magnetic *rapport* is established with the new arrival, the circle and herself. Some mediums seem tolerably independent of extraneous influences, but this one seems hurt if any one touches metals while in the circle, after she has passed into the sleep. The clairvoyante, Mrs. Welton, is similarly sensitive to her magnetiser touching metals while she is examining a case in the sleep; if he is obliged to do so, he interposes his silk handkerchief between his hand and the metallic object. I know of an instance when at a circle once, a spirit intimated a wish, by the alphabet, to make a communication through the hand of a writing medium at the table. The alphabet-medium, thinking that her part was over, presently rose from the table with the object of stirring the fire, the communication was interrupted with the sentence "*Don't touch iron!*" We must consider that magnetic *rapport* was for the time established between the spirit and the medium, through whom he had used the alphabet.

This subject requires to be studied by circles if they would have such phenomena as would over-ride the theories about "unconscious cerebration," "automatic action," "mesmeric suggestion," &c. Without the observance of the proper magnetic conditions, the medium cannot be *truly a medium*, in the full acceptance of the term. Am I asked what I think are the proper conditions? My experience prompts the answer, that the spirit-visitant to a circle will best prescribe them; but that before they are asked to do so, devotional feeling should prevail, and common prayer be made. Then let the conditions and circumstances they recommend be loyally observed.

Let me conclude with an interesting fact. At a late circle, when the conditions I have mentioned were observed, the medium was magnetically drawn to a gentleman seated in a corner of the room. Grasping his hand, she said, he was a stranger to the circle, and addressed him reprovingly and exhortingly upon some moral failing. To his inquiry as to who was addressing him, her answer was "Be satisfied, I am a spirit friend and brother." A gentleman present seemed to know the person thus addressed, and on the breaking up of the circle, spoke apologetically to him, and said that mediums sometimes erred. His answer was "It is singular: all mediums address me in the same manner and strain. There is a foundation of fact in what they all say to me. What she said as to my being a stranger here, is true. I was admitted on using a friend's name."

On this evening fourteen out of a circle of sixteen were severally addressed in a characteristic and recognisable manner by spirit friends and relatives through one medium.

A. BOSTWICK.

9, Exeter Change, Strand.